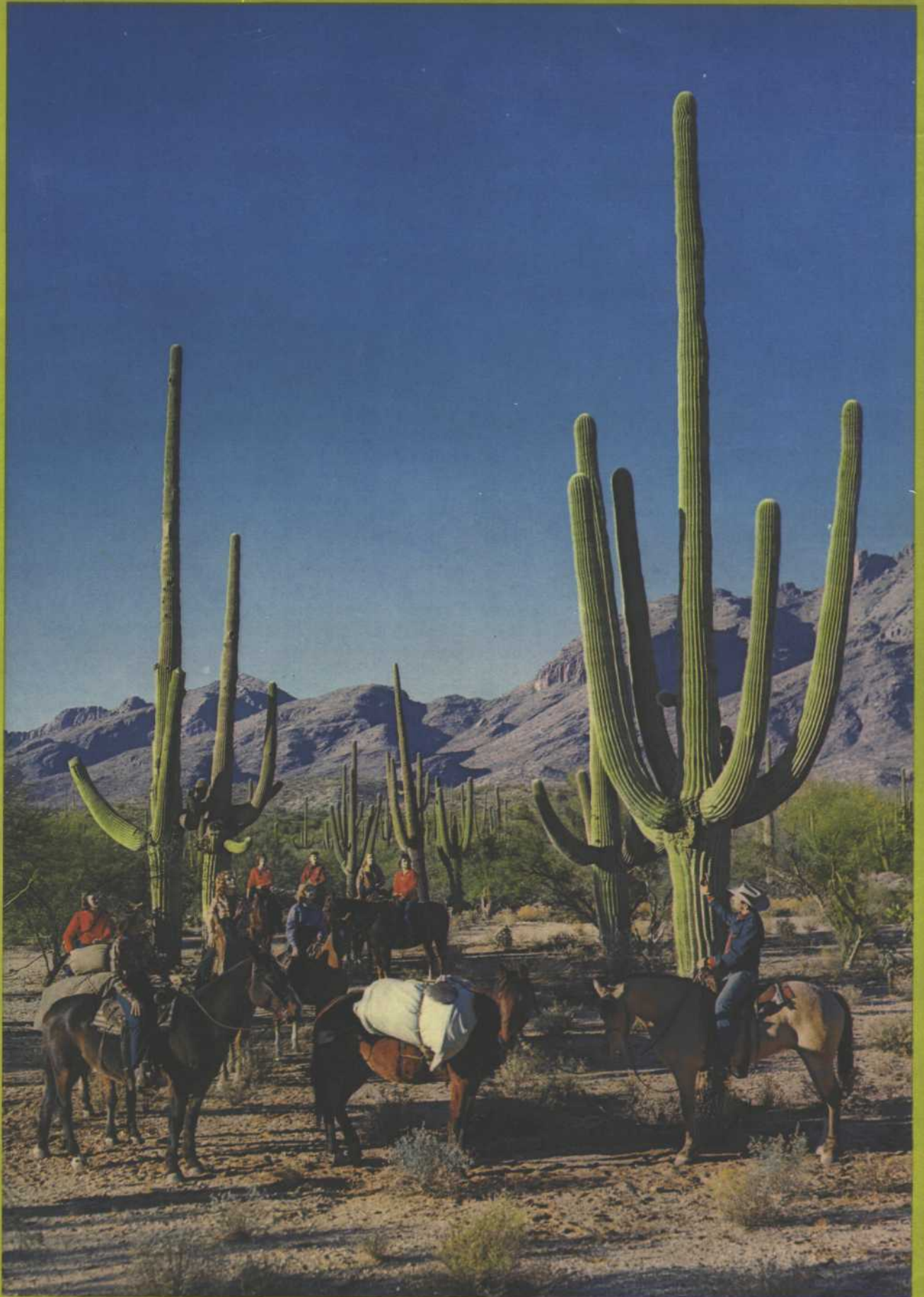


Desert

SPECIAL
CHRISTMAS ISSUE

8 PAGES
OF
COLOR
INSIDE



December
1959
35c



God's Gift

• • • • •

By JORDAN E. DETZER
First Methodist Church, Barstow, Calif.

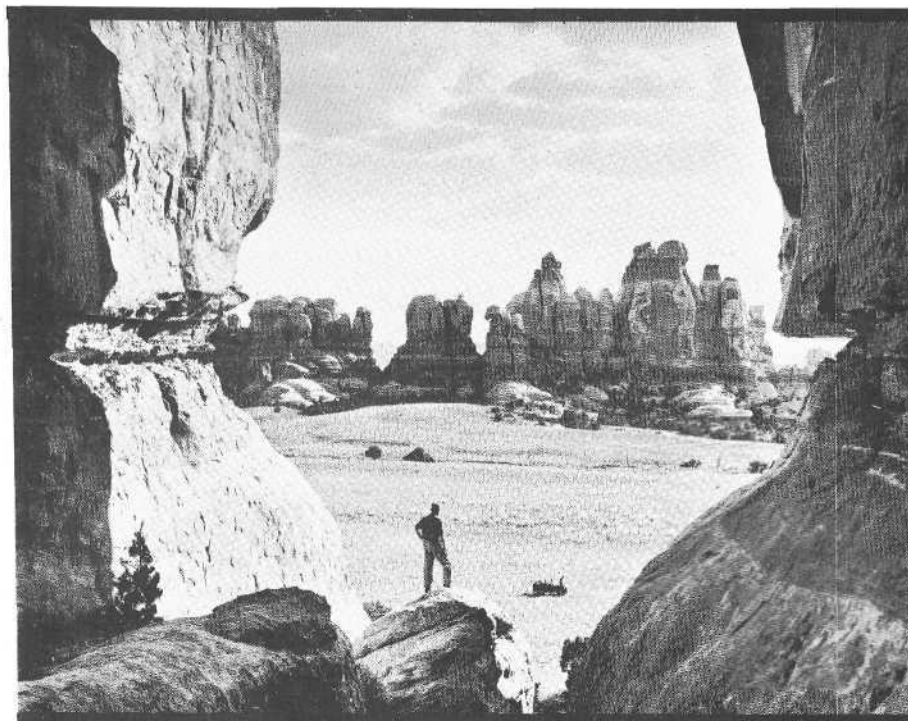
OUT OF THE tempest and fury of sandstorms, silty whirlwinds and broiling heat that smothers the wildernesses and volcano-pitted mountains, have come some of the world's greatest religious leaders. It was in the desert that they heard the "still small voice of God." The challenging Hebrew Abraham became the architect of a new nation and faith by traveling through deserts, followed by the conquering spirits of Moses, Job, David, Isaiah, Elijah, Ezekial, Amos and many other great pathfinders of the Old Testament. The New Testament rises as a vast pyramid of strength and miracle as Jesus is led into the desert by the Spirit of God. For 40 days and nights He struggled with his great decision in the desert until He decided to serve God and man.

This great coincidence between religious leaders, their spiritual insights and power found on the deserts, is seen in Paul the Apostle, John the Baptist and numerous other great prophets of God. It was in the wildernesses of brooding solitude where they found guidance for their message of faith and eternal life. They were closer to God in the desert's exquisite splendor because God's high-

est ideals and commandments seemed more real to them there.

If we care enough, we too can find numerous ways to sense God and His supreme values of creation within the sunrises and sunsets, the starry heavens, the overtures of coming storms, lightning, flash-floods, and vast panoramas with which to fill our hearts with rainbows of new perspective, renewed meaning in life and inward serenity. Practical lessons can come today even to our highly mechanized and speeding civilized people as they cross the superhighways over Southwest deserts. The first lesson is eternal life.

All life is not barren in the vast level plains. There are textbooks of beauty and grandure. God's historic perspective is seen in the progress of His species of insects, reptiles, birds, animals and people. We can learn of the generations of men who have come and gone, of cities that have been constructed and then buried beneath the sands, nations which have risen and fallen. From the fossils in dead seas, green layered stratas of the colored hills, the ancient artifacts, petroglyphs and pictographs of



TOP LEFT—A BUTTE IN SOUTHEASTERN UTAH. UNLIKE SO MUCH OF THIS COLORFUL REGION, HERE IS A DULL-GRAY FORMATION OF CLAY—BUT EROSION HAS TRANSFORMED IT INTO A STRIKING PIECE OF SCULPTURE. ONLY THE MOST INDOMITABLE OF PLANT-LIFE CAN EXIST IN THIS "DEAD WORLD"—AND EXIST IT DOES.

NEEDLES OF ROCK IN SOUTHEASTERN UTAH. BUTTRESSES OF RED SANDSTONE FRAME A CORNER OF THE FANTASTICALLY-ERODED FORMS IN THE REMOTE AND LITTLE-EXPLORED NEEDLES AREA. TRAVERSABLE ONLY BY HORSE, FOOT OR JEEP, THIS LANDSCAPE IS LAID OUT IN CIRCLES OF DESERT VEGETATION ENCLOSED BY GI-GANTIC FINGERS OF BANDED STONE. IN THIS WORLD OF IMMENSE FORM, MAN BECOMES SMALL INDEED.

. from the Desert

Photographs By
JOSEF MUENCH

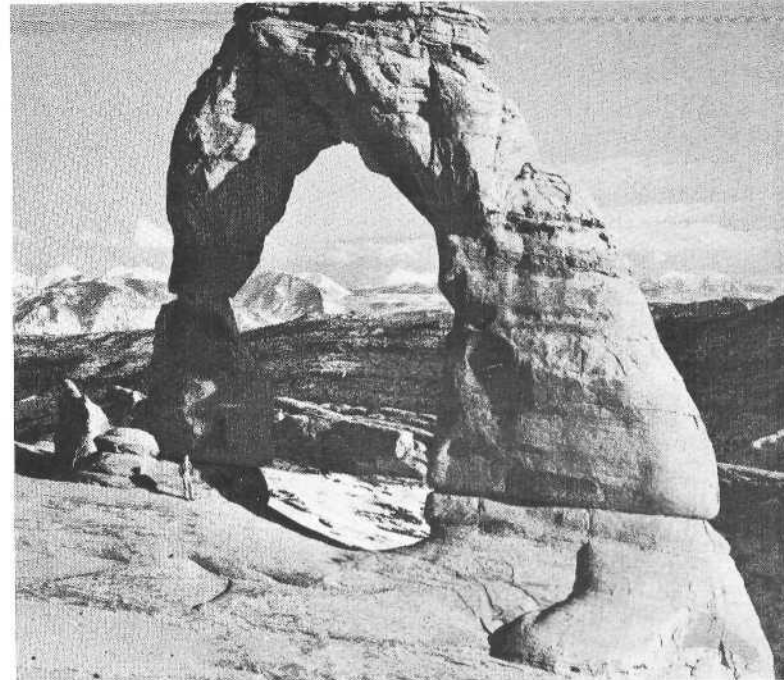
bygone mankind, we see God's creations straining to reach more perfect goals.

For Christians this happened with the glory and light at the Christmas birth of Jesus in Bethlehem and later in His resurrection. Other generations come and go, and they will continue to be buried beneath the sands sifted through the fingers of the ages and yet, if we knew the simple ingredients and composition of a single grain of this sand, we would be even more confident in the reliability of God's eternity for each of us!

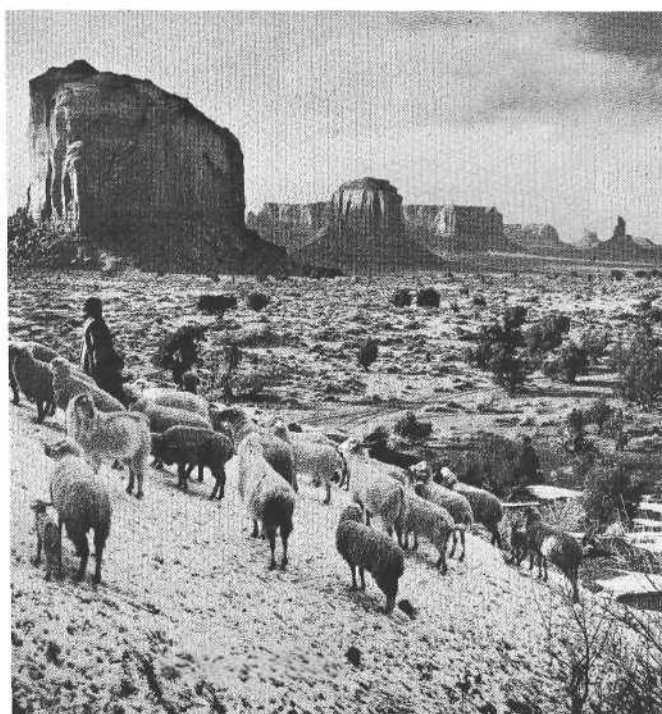
Another lesson from the sands is fraternity, brotherhood. The giving of oneself, powers, talents and life for the blessing of our fellowmen. This means sharing friendships, transportations, water, shade and rest, and can indicate the interrelatedness that is possible upon our sun-kissed plains. The environment itself reflects an interdependence of physical compliments. As all deserts have mountains within and around them, rivers, springs, oases and dunes following dunes, so we see how God has planned all things to be dependent one upon another: sea-

sonal cloudbursts, run-off washes, protected springs and the distant thunderheads formed from the earth's evaporation. In this magnificent setting we see ourselves as sand specks in deserts of time and space. Petty problems and demands are absorbed in a new sense of vastness, of peace.

The desert's practical lessons of eternity and brotherhood can teach us that the kind of lives we should live are eternal and interdependent with everyone and everything. Every thought, word, act and motive effects not only the present condition of our lives, but all the eternity of our lives and future civilizations as well. How careful we should be of every thought, word and deed. As Isaiah says, "Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God." May every thought be as pure as the desert air, every word as uplifting as the mountainous vistas, every deed as encouraging as the struggling plant life. Then shall our eternal existence be one of matchless beauty, infinite worth and great happiness, as is the spiritual, emotional and mental atmosphere of the desert whence came our faith!—END



TOP RIGHT—DELICATE ARCH IN ARCHES NATIONAL MONUMENT, UTAH, IS ONE OF THE WORLD'S MOST BEAUTIFUL "SKY WINDOWS." THE ARCH FRAMES THE SNOW-CLAD LA SAL MOUNTAINS IN THE BACKGROUND. ARCH OPENING IS 85-FEET WIDE, 65-FEET HIGH. SETTING IS IN THE REDROCK COUNTRY NORTH OF MOAB, UTAH.



SNOWY PASTURES OF MONUMENT VALLEY. AS THE WIND WHISTLES OVER SAND AND SNOW, A NAVAJO WOMAN TENDS HER SMALL FLOCK. FEED FOR LIVESTOCK IS SCARCE IN THE DESERTLAND OF THE NAVAJO, BUT THIS DOMAIN IS RICH IN ITS VAST BEAUTY. HERE IS OPEN SPACE AND A BALANCED SWEEP OF ROCK FIGURES CARVED INTO CLASSIC BUTTES AND MESAS.

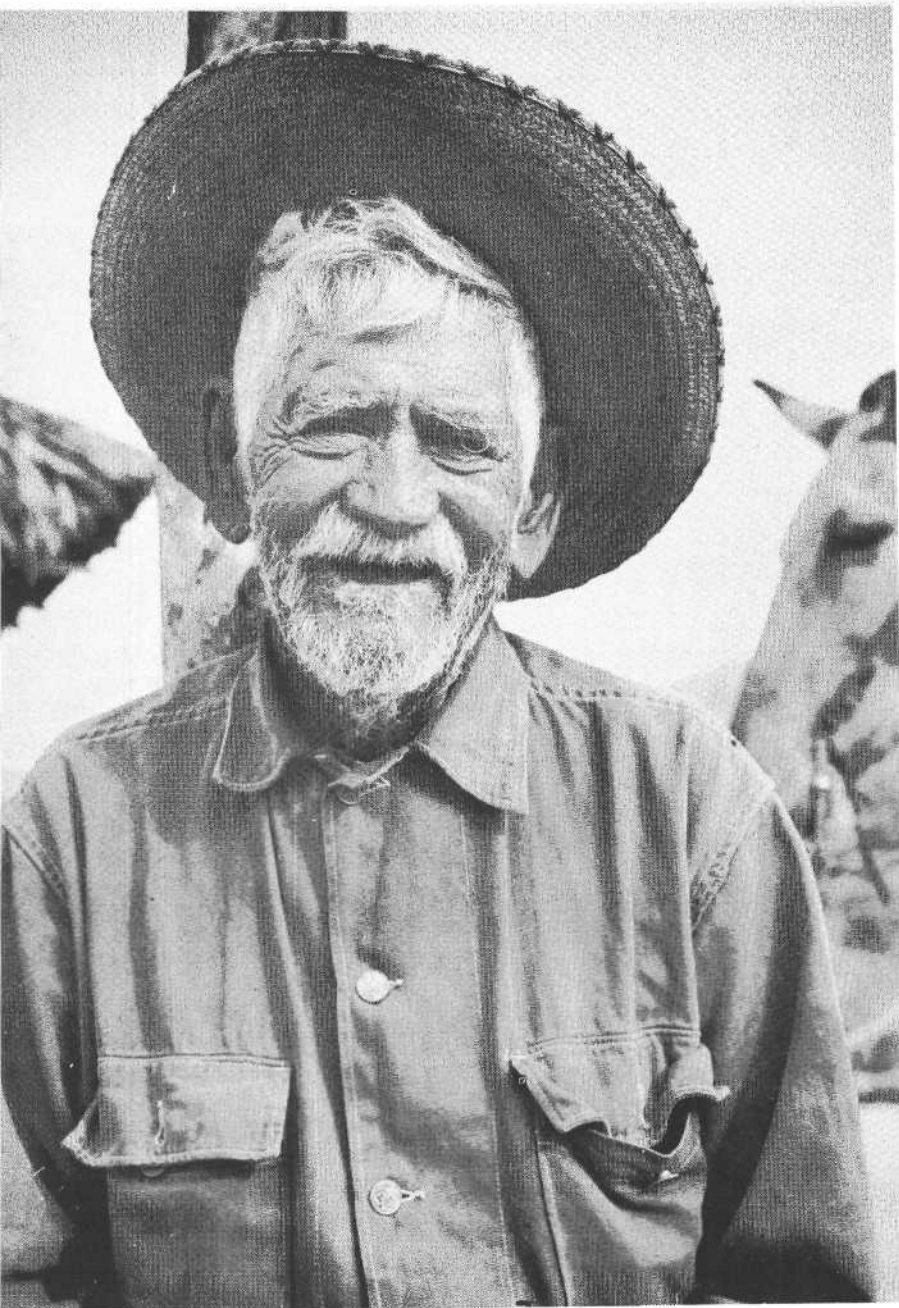
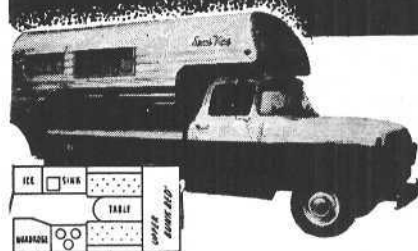


PHOTO OF THE MONTH

Vaquero

This pioneer cattleman of El Tule was photographed by Charles W. Herbert of Tucson. El Tule—"one of God's most favored places for the raising of cattle"—is only a few miles from the very tip of the long and narrow Baja California peninsula.

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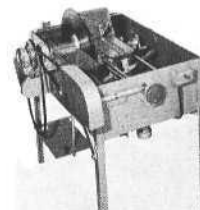
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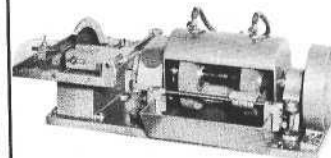
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Publisher's Notes . . .

In a desert land far away and long ago the first Christmas was celebrated by a few shepherds and wise men and townspeople of Bethlehem. Recognizing that an arid land, similar to our own Southwest Desert, was the setting for the original Christmas, we have tried, in a small way, to tie in this December issue with a seasonal theme.

The special Christmas color insert at the center of this month's *Desert Magazine* is compiled from some favorite *Desert* covers of past years.

Early winter storms on the low desert foretell of another kind of color—spring wildflowers. We who live on the desert have our fingers crossed. Perhaps this will be a "great" flower year—so far it looks good.

Among the thousands of subscribers who correspond with us each year, there are always a handful who thoughtfully send us money, but don't tell us who they are or to whom the subscriptions are to go. Last month, for example, we received an envelope containing a \$5 bill and two \$1 bills. They were

enfolded in a white piece of paper—no name, no address, no clues at all. We can only hope that the anonymous subscriber will write us soon. We have the envelope and the post-mark, but this one came from a big city, so we can't do much detective work through our circulation files. Actually, we did check some 70 names and addresses, but failed to solve the case of the missing name.

Desert Magazine is now being printed on a brand-new Miehle 38 offset press. The machine, made in Germany, was shipped by boat to Los Angeles and then trucked to Palm Desert. When it arrived, the press-erector discovered that one part, small but vital, was missing. After an unforeseen 10-day delay, the press was completed. As a result, *Desert Magazine* was late in delivery last month.

Already, and there are still dozens more to hear from, we have been reminded of our tardiness by several members of the *Desert* family.

On the subject of press equipment, we welcome *Desert* readers to visit our printing plant located in the *Desert Magazine* building in Palm Desert.

CHUCK SHELTON
Publisher



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Desert — magazine of the OUTDOOR SOUTHWEST

Volume 22

DECEMBER, 1959

Number 12

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"Camp Trip Among the Desert Saguaros" is the title given to the cover picture by well-known Southwestern photographer Chuck Abbott. He took the photo near his Tucson home.

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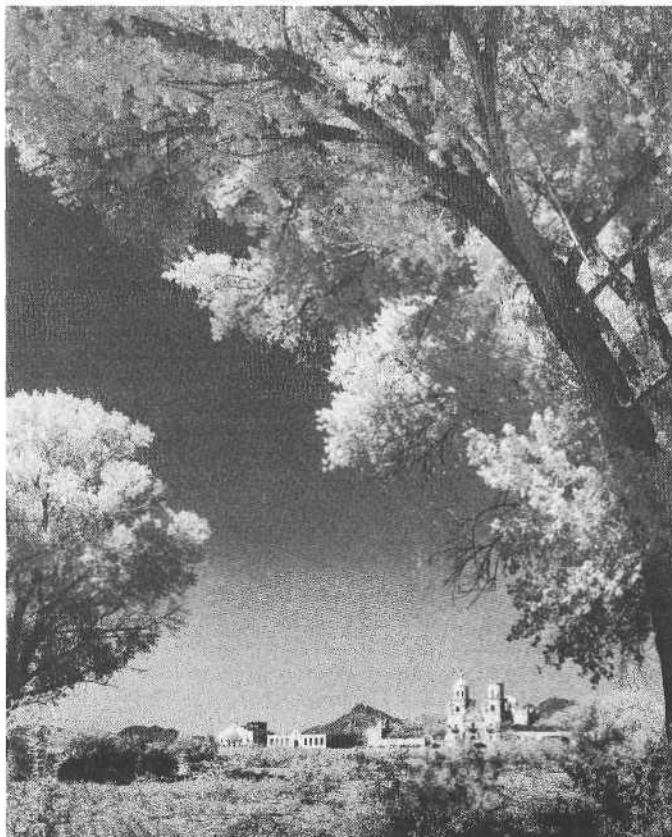
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TUCSON CHILDREN PARTICIPATE
IN A LAS POSADAS PROCESSION. 

 FATHER KINO FOUNDED MISSION
SAN XAVIER DEL BAC IN 1700.



FELICE NAVIDAD

... means "Merry
Christmas" in the
land of sun-filled
Yule seasons

**Southwesterners substitute
warmth and color for
snowy whiteness--and come up
with the same
Christmastime spirit . . .**

BY PHYLLIS W. HEALD

MERRY CHRISTMAS is one of the happiest expressions in the English language. Symbolized by Santa Claus, sleigh-bells, gaily wrapped gifts and joyous laughter, this greeting traditionally belongs to a white world of glittering snow beauty. This is one reason why it doesn't seem to fit into the cactus-studded desert setting of the Southwest.

Visitors often find our desert Christmas season a "let-down." Over and over again they exclaim, "I miss the cold and the snow! Besides, I feel silly saying, 'Merry Christmas,' when I'm dressed in a short-sleeved shirt and bermudas."

These newly arrived Southwesterners believe it incongruous to hang stockings from a mantel that has no warming fire beneath, or decorate a tree that isn't silhouetted against a frost-etched window.

But, while the "Merry Christmas" greeting may seem inharmonious with the arid lands, it is certainly familiar and is used here all the time. Today, even little Mexican children grin happily and call, "Merry Christmas, *señores*." However, it has not always been so. Not much further back than 150 years ago, this greeting had never been heard in the Southwest. It came with the first Anglos—the trappers, miners and homesteaders.

Prior to the arrival of "Merry Christmas" from the East, inhabitants of the Southwest observed December 25 as a Holy Day, but not a festive one. For more than three centuries—since the days of the first Conquistadores in 1539—Christian Indians, Spaniards and Mexicans have celebrated the Nativity with church services and religious ceremonies. And they have always wished one another, *Felice Navidad*, which means a "happy" Christmas Day—not one that is "lively," "mirthful" or "fun-filled."

It is interesting to note, with regard to this purely religious approach to the holidays, that the Southwest country is comparable, both physically and climatically, to the land where Christ was born. The first Christmas was on the desert—not in the north woods. We have the same arid mountains as Palestine — the same dry river-beds,

vineyards, date palms and pastoral countryside where goats and sheep roam; the same golden sands and even a duplication of the Dead Sea in California's Salton Sea. There are many areas throughout the Southwest where the "Little Town of Bethlehem" might be re-located in familiar geographic surroundings.

Thus our desert has a dual holiday personality. It is the meeting place of the Old and the New Worlds. And along with such Northern customs as St. Nicholas, the reading of "The Night Before Christmas," and tinsel-decked trees, we can enjoy Latin-American *pinata* parties, the *Las Posadas* pageant, and the famed *luminarias*.

The latter might be considered the Southwest's substitute for Christmas trees. Actually, they are tiny bonfires—symbolically lighting the way for the Christ child. Today, the most common type of *luminaria* is a candle placed in a brown paper bag half-filled with sand.

The candle-in-the-paper-sack lighting is effective and inexpensive, and easy to make (see page 27 for an article on an Albuquerque couple who make *luminaria* candles).

New Mexico is especially famous for its *luminaria* display during the holidays. It is said that the idea originated many years ago when a Christmas party was planned at the Palace of the Governor. In an effort to create unique ornamentation, someone remembered seeing a small church lighted by seven candles set in translucent containers. Elaborating on the idea, the Palace was turned into a twinkling fairyland.

Sometime later a fraternity at the University of New Mexico faced the problem of no money in the treasury for Christmas decorations. Again someone remembered *luminarias*. The result was so charming that the entire school took up the idea the next year. Now all roofs of all buildings on campus are illuminated, and admirers come from far and near to see the more than 8000 glowing lights.

Luminarias are used for other occasions too, but at Christmas time they out-shine themselves. In churches, or as religious symbols, they are often seen in groups of seven, nine or 12. Twelve represent the Apostles; nine, the nine principals of the Nativity; seven the Virgin, Joseph, Christ Child, lamb and three Wise Men.

The pageant of *Las Posadas* is one of the oldest of all Christmas celebrations. It is also one of the most popular because it is told in song as well as in pageantry, and the "cast" can and often does include an entire community. Another pleasing feature is that *Las Posadas* is performed for nine consecutive nights, beginning on the 16th of December and ending Christmas eve.

Translated, *Las Posadas* means "The Inns," and it is the story of the journey of Mary and Joseph from Nazareth to Bethlehem. The processions are often made up of children marching in pairs, the leaders holding images of Mary and Joseph. Those following carry poinsettias and lighted candles. The singing never ceases as the procession stops before an "Inn" requesting shelter—

*In the name of Heaven I beg for shelter
My beloved wife can no longer travel.*

From the darkened house comes an answer—
*This is no Inn. Keep on going and don't
Trouble us; I can't open the door.*

This goes on for eight nights—but on the ninth, the pilgrims' request for shelter is met with an open door and a song of welcome—

*Enter Holy pilgrims, and take your corner—
Not in my poor house, but in my heart.*

Las Posadas is a delightful Christmas ritual and is performed in most cities and towns of the Southwest as well as in Mexico. Tucson takes special pride in its *Las Posadas* processions, and has several each year sponsored

by the Church, Folklore Club and Tucson Festival Society. Thus, singing and chanting of young voices blended with old can be heard in some parts of town on every one of the nine nights these Holy Pilgrims slowly wend through the streets looking for an Inn of Bethlehem.

Merriest part of the Southwest's traditional Christmas Season is the *Pinata* party. These affairs, which start December 16 with the first *Las Posadas* procession, are repeated each night until Christmas Eve, with never-failing delight to the children.

Pinatas (pronounced pe-NYAH-tas) are brightly-colored papier-mache ornaments made to resemble animals, stars, birds and even humans. Burros are the most popular subjects, and it is not unusual to see one of these cute little fellows with a bright green body, yellow feet, red ears and a blue collar. Indeed, a *pinata* decorated in less than four clashing colors indicates its creator to be a novice or artistic sissy.

An *olla* is attached to the figure, and just before the party this clay pot is filled with candy, cookies and fruit. Then the *pinata* is hung from the ceiling.

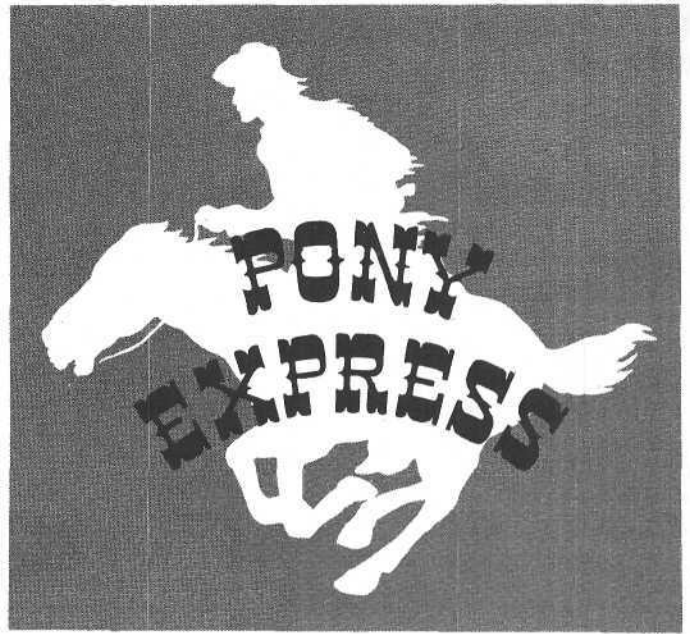
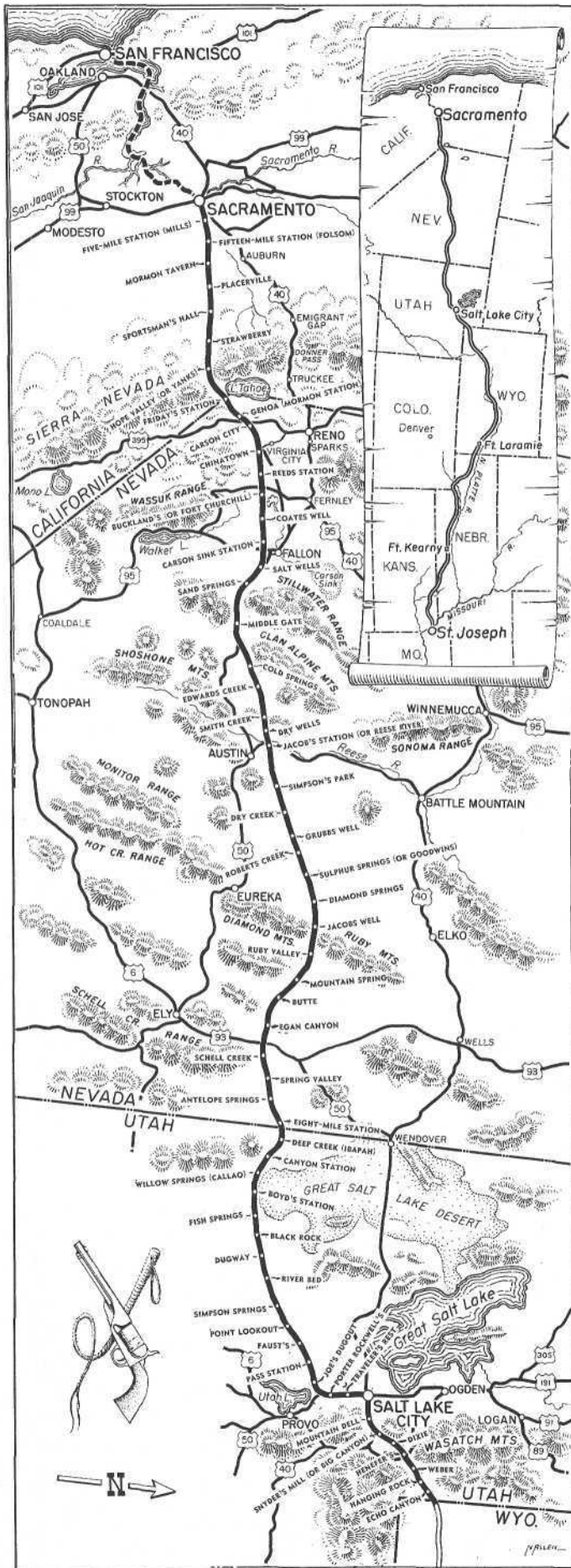
Children get first try in the game of "breaking the *pinata*," which closely resembles "pinning the tail on a donkey." While everyone sings, a child is blindfolded, given a stick and allowed so many minutes to hit the *pinata* overhead. When the *pinata* is broken, the youngsters make a wild dive for the scattered goodies.

While these parties reach their height of popularity during the Christmas Season, they, like *luminarias*, are not exclusively holiday affairs. They are also given for bridal showers, birthdays, feast days, and other celebrations. I have witnessed occasions in which white doves were released from golden star *pinatas*, rose petals fell from a pink crepe parasol, and a stork *pinata* dropped gifts of baby clothes on an expectant mother.

So, while it is true that we live in a land that has far more sunshine than snow, we can substitute our warm and colorful festivities for the "traditional" holiday beauty of whiteness and frost. And, in time, we learn that the softly spoken Spanish *Felice Navidad* is a charming reply to "Merry Christmas."—END

"Who
wants
first
try
at
breaking
the
pinata?"





THUNDERING ACROSS the West for a year-and-a-half, through heat and storm and the dark of night, riders of the Pony Express put their mounts over nearly two-thirds of a million miles of wilderness trail to make history that will live forever. With a large part of that action having taken place in the Intermountain region between the Rockies and the Sierra, it is certain that the forthcoming Pony Express Centennial will elicit special attention in the states of Utah and Nevada where some of the last physical reminders of this famous mail route are located.

At the time the Pony Express was inaugurated—April, 1860—the only states west of the Missouri River were California and Oregon, the remainder of the country embraced within several territories. One of the largest of these was Utah Territory, commonly shown by contemporary map-makers as a large blank space designated "The Great American Desert." Extending some 600 miles from the California line to the western boundary of Nebraska Territory, Utah Territory included not only the present states of Utah and Nevada, but also large portions of Wyoming and Colorado.

Then, as now, this was the least-explored region of its size in the nation (excluding Alaska), and one of the world's most sparsely populated areas. In the watered valleys north and south of Great Salt Lake a few determined Mormons had been struggling for a dozen years to establish homes and farms, and mining men were beginning to collect at the new camp of Virginia City where silver had been discovered the previous summer. Otherwise, settlers were almost non-existent, and even these few who had dared to put down roots lived in a state of jeopardy, forever threatened by hostile bands of Ute, Paiute and Goshute Indians smoldering in resentment of foreign intrusion and secretly girding for war.

In consequence, the 500 miles from Salt Lake to Carson Valley was the most hazardous link in the 1966-mile system that connected St. Joseph, Missouri—in the East—with Sacramento, California—in the mail-hungry West.

On this Utah-Nevada trail were the longest unbroken stretches without water for man or mount. Here more riders would be attacked, more hostlers and station keepers slain, more stations laid waste, and more horses stolen, than anywhere else on the route. Natural result was that this same section of trail across Nevada and Utah produced

some of the greatest deeds of valor and feats of endurance ever accredited to a carrier of Uncle Sam's mail.

Man's appreciation of history never comes into full flower until he stands on the spot where that history was made. For this reason, if for no other, it would be well if the few remaining Pony Express ruins were preserved. Just to lay a hand on the rock or adobe wall of some old station, or to stand in its crumbled doorway and look out upon silent brown hills unchanged since the last weary Express rider galloped up and away nearly a century ago, is to evoke a priceless awareness of the principles that made America great.

Every Pony Express ruin I have visited in the Great Basin has given me this same appreciation of the past. At Carson Sink Station, southwest of Fallon, Nevada, the adobe walls are melted away until their highest section stands no more than a foot or two above the ground, yet enough of the adobe remains so that the full outline of the old station may be traced. Several years ago, while wandering over the flat surrounding the ruins, I idly gathered a few hand-forged horseshoe nails, some bits of harness leather, twisted and brittle, some glass fragments as deeply purple as a desert lupine—a fragile bridge over which I traveled back into the days of the Pony Express.

Standing alone on the site of that old station, wrapped in the hallowed hush that seems to enfold such places, I fingered those little tokens and wondered if one of them might have belonged to "Pony Bob" Haslam, who had ridden through here on a memorable day in 1860.

Haslam left Friday's Station, Lake Tahoe, on the morning of May 10. If things had gone according to schedule, young Bob would have galloped through the pleasant spring sunshine, changing to a fresh horse at each of the relay stations spotted about a dozen miles apart, and after riding 75 miles to Buckland's Station on the Carson River, would have found another courier waiting to speed the mail on its next lap toward St. Joseph. But the Paiutes were on the warpath — raiding, burning and scalping. Stations lay in smoldering ruins, horses had been killed or stolen, and when Pony Bob reached the Carson no relief rider was there to replace him. So he rode on, through Coate's Wells and Carson Sink Station, on past Salt Wells, Sand Springs, Middle Gate, Cold Springs and Edwards Creek. Finally, at Smith Creek Station—190 miles from his starting place—a rider was waiting to relieve him. But Pony Bob didn't have a long rest. Soon as the west-bound courier arrived with the mail, Bob swung aboard a fresh horse and started back along that same trail of death and destruction. Before quitting the saddle at Friday's Station he had ridden a total of 380 miles, with only a few hours respite, and had gained a snatch of immortality.

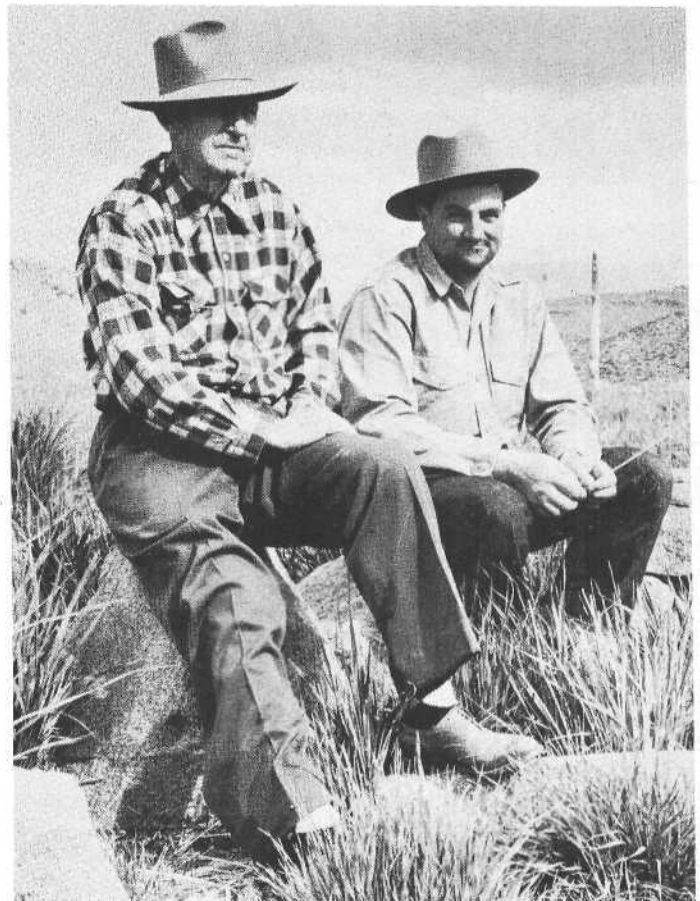
Although each courier rode armed with a pistol and knife, he had instructions to engage in Indian combat only if surrounded so that escape otherwise was impossible. In all ordinary brushes with the redman—and they occurred almost daily during that summer of 1860—a Pony Express rider's first line of defense was the fleetness of his mount.

The 500 horses and mules employed on the route were the best money could buy, and being grain-fed usually were able to outdistance the grass-fed Indian ponies. Because of this, riders fared much better than station tenders, and I know of but one horseman who was slain by Indians while in the employ of the Pony Express. He was Jose Zowgalz, a young Mexican, who was bristling with arrows when he rode into Dry Creek Station (northeast of the present town of Austin, Nevada) and there succumbed to his injuries.

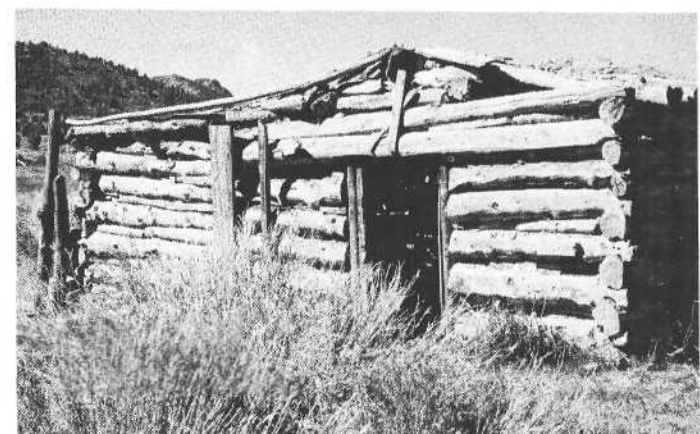
This same post also was the scene of more bloodshed when Station Keeper Ralph Rosier and John Applegate



AN OLD PRINT ENTITLED, "PONY EXPRESS SALUTING THE TELEGRAPH." PRECIOUS FEW MEMENTOES OF HISTORIC MAIL SYSTEM HAVE BEEN HANDED DOWN TO PRESENT GENERATION.



DR. F. G. TAGERT, LEFT, POSSIBLY THE ONLY LIVING MAN WHO HAS VISITED THE SITE OF EVERY PONY EXPRESS STATION IN NEVADA. WITH HIM IS JOE STRESHLEY, UPON WHOSE RANCH NORTHEAST OF AUSTIN, IS SITE OF SIMPSON'S PARK STATION.



RESIDENTS OF FORT SCHELLBOURNE, NEV., BELIEVE THIS OLD LOG BUILDING TO BE FORMER RELAY STATION FOR PONY EXPRESS AT SCHELL CREEK (AS FORT WAS ORIGINALLY KNOWN).

were slain and scalped by warring redmen, while their companions, Silas McCandless and Lafayette Ball, ran barefooted across the desert to safety at Roberts Creek Station, 25 miles east. During this same Indian trouble, James Alcott of Simpson's Park Station (also northeast of Austin) was slain and his station destroyed. Although I have found no records to such effect, it is likely that Alcott occupies one of the dozen-or-so old graves in the lonely little cemetery north of the station. Last time I visited this place a few of the old headboards were still standing, but not one inscription could be read.

Another keeper was slain at Cold Springs Station, the half-fallen stone walls of which still may be seen on either side of the road at a point seven miles north of Eastgate, Nevada, on U.S. 50. One after another Deep Creek Station, Egan Canyon, Eight Mile, Antelope Springs, Spring Valley and Schell Creek Station were burned or destroyed

A Century Has Passed Since Men and Horses Defied Time, Indians and the Arid Wastes

during that same Indian uprising, which cost the Pony Express line \$75,000 in loss of equipment and hire of additional men to protect the isolated posts en route.

I wish I could say I have visited the site of every Pony Express station in Nevada and Utah, but several posts are still in my yet-to-come. As a matter of fact, the only living person I know who has visited all the stations in Nevada is my good friend and fellow ghost-towner, Dr. F. G. Tagert, formerly of Austin and now a resident of Palm Springs, Calif. Doc's explorations on the old trail were made about 10 years ago in company with the late Gerald (Jerry) Kane of San Francisco and Reno. Jerry probably did more than any other man to relocate and mark the 31 stations that served the route through Nevada. With only two or three exceptions these sites are situated in obscure and isolated spots far from any place of present habitation.

One of Jerry Kane's best aids and advisers in locating the old posts was the late William Tell Maestretti, also of Austin. On one occasion Maestretti guided Jerry and Doc to the long-forgotten site of Edwards Creek Station. Maestretti likely was the only man then living who knew where this old station was located. He had lived at nearby Smith Creek and remembered that the Edwards station had been built of rock and located on the creek bank. In later years, while ranching in that vicinity, he tore down the old building and used the rock to erect a barn about 75 yards to the north. The barn was still standing when Doc and Jerry visited the site in 1949.

Razing old landmarks for building materials is a most deplorable practice, but when such structures are privately owned and the owners wish to demolish them, there isn't much that can be done about it. In this connection I feel especially fortunate to have been able to visit and photograph the old Ruby Valley Station before it was razed by its owners, Mr. and Mrs. Roy Harris. Situated in an isolated spot, 90 miles from either Elko or Ely, the nearest towns, the old station was built of juniper logs planted upright in stockade fashion, and was equipped with two rubble-stone fireplaces.

This Ruby Valley Station is another place where various deeds were done and Western history made. On July 4, 1860, Indian depredations made it necessary for the

20-year-old Mormon lad, Billy Fisher, to stick to the saddle for almost 36 straight hours, during which time he carried the mail from Ruby Valley to Salt Lake City—300 miles with six horses and two mules. (Only six men in the history of the Pony Express covered as many as 300 miles in a single ride. William "Buffalo Bill" Cody made a 320-mile ride from Red Butte, Nebraska Territory, to Rock Ridge Station, Utah Territory.)

In direct contrast to stations nearly or wholly vanished is the old Willow Springs Station, which didn't even look old when I visited it a few seasons ago. Situated in the present village of Callao, Utah, this former Pony Express property was acquired about 75 years ago by the Bagleys who were still using the building for storage purposes. The old cabin, unfortunately, had nothing to offer a photographer because the owners had covered the exterior of its adobe walls with a protective wooden sheathing, the result being that several newer structures in the community are far "older" than this relic of pre-Civil War days.

In venerable towns such as Callao, where live direct descendants of men who helped make Pony Express history, one might suppose that every home would hold relics of the old stations and the couriers who served them. Such is not the case. Probably no other phase of Western history has bequeathed so few mementos of a material nature, and it is a rare museum which has even one authentic Pony Express article. Saddles, bridles, *mochilas* and spurs have disappeared almost as though they had never existed.

During the 18 months in which it operated, the Pony couriers are said to have transported 34,753 pieces of mail—yet, even those thousands of envelopes have vanished until the remaining few are worth many times their weight in gold. At a recent auction of Western Express Company "covers," one partially defective envelope bearing a Pony Express stamp was sold for \$2100; another brought \$750.

And so, today, with material equipment of the Pony Express virtually unknown, the mail carried commanding fantastic prices, stations vanished or standing in lonely ruin, and the last survivor of those 200 stalwart young riders some 20 years in his grave, our nation is making ready to celebrate the 100th Anniversary of this most colorful mail line.

What form that celebration will take remains to be seen, since several controversial details remain to be worked out or compromised by committees representing the eight states involved. In addition to various community celebrations, the main feature of the Centennial observance likely will be a re-running on horseback of the Pony Express route with relay teams on the East-West course competing for time against relays riding from West to East.

But committeemen from some of the states to be crossed insist that this re-running should be done in April, on paved highways nearest the old trail, and by hired riders supplied by Hollywood moving picture companies. Committeemen of several other states—particularly Nevada, Utah and Wyoming—feel that the re-running should be done in snow-free June, but on the old trail itself and by volunteer horsemen residing in each of the several states.

But, it doesn't make much difference how the Centennial is celebrated, or even if it is celebrated at all. Certainly it matters not to those who sped the mail onward through heat and wind and cold, with threat of the redman's vengeance ever hanging over them. Why did they do it? Certainly not for praise, or phenomenal wages, or headlines, or movie contracts, or patriotism or posthumous honors.

These men gave it everything they had simply because it was their assigned job to get the mail through. It was their work and they performed it well and honorably; and with that work completed, they rode off the trail and into the pages of history.—END

Exploring Whispering Canyon

ON THE GUARDIAN ANGEL ISLAND

Part III of a four-installment account by Artist-Writer

John Hilton

of his most recent travels and explorations in

Baja California

Next month: Isla Encantada



BAJA CALIFORNIA SHARK FISHERMEN IN
DUGOUT CANOE HAUL IN THEIR LINE.

THE BOAT'S engine was rebuilt, but even then it ran hot. This was just a small matter of timing, the mechanics, helpers and kibitzers thought at first. After a couple of precious days spent in testing the motor, it was decided that it was not timing—the water pump was no good. The nearest replacement was on the Atlantic seaboard.

Our spirits were at a low point while we stood on the Bahia de los Angeles beach staring across the gulf waters to our elusive destination—the island of Angel de la Guarda. We were a glum lot—and there sat the island like a mountain range in the Sea of Cortez, smiling a rosy-pink smile of mockery.

Then Dr. Gordon Carman suggested that we take the *El Seguro* out anyway.

"It runs fine at half speed," he assured us. "It will just take longer to get there and back—but, we won't have the safety factor of being able to outrun a sudden storm."

The *El Seguro* was a straw, and I a man about to go down for the third time. I grabbed at it. Lillian Carman agreed, too, and said we should get going that very afternoon. Nacho, the Mexican boatman, was not so enthusiastic. His confidence had been shaken by the trouble we had had with the boat. Nacho looked to the south and said, "Wind tonight from the

south. It is not good. It is blowing in the channel right now."

Our hearts fell again. Suddenly Doc cried, "What do we have a plane for? Let's fly out over the channel and see what it looks like."

In five minutes we were circling over the inner bay and gaining altitude. There were no white-caps in the channel — only a slight swell coming in from the south making a tremendous pattern of concentric arcs 10 miles across. There was practically no wind aloft, and the swells did not look bad. We landed and walked over to Nacho and Lillian.

"Let's go," said Doc. "It's now or never."

Hurriedly we packed our gear and

threw it aboard. Even Nacho caught the spirit of things. "A little wind did not scare Columbus," he said with a smile as he rolled a 15-gallon drum of fresh water down to the *El Seguro*.

Time seemed to stand still during the crossing. The motor droned, the water hissed. The stars swung back and forth across the sky ahead.

At 2 a.m. we neared the jagged point which was our destination. We had broken the jinx—the island was ours. Nacho took the wheel and turned in near strange jutting rocks surrounding a crescent beach of cobbles. Nacho seemed to know the anchorage for he pulled in without hesitation, glancing at the dark silhouettes about him for his bearing.

We unloaded our bedding and slept on shore. Dawn at the anchorage of Punta del Diablo was a piece of magic. The sky was deep blue-black tinted with the faintest lemon hue near the water. Obscure outlines of Tiburon, the island famous for its once-cannibalistic Seris, were seen southeastward. In the foreground was the crescent of cobblestone beach ending in a magnificent upthrust of volcanic rock resembling a great monument. Gradually the sky became more yellow. The water at our feet took on more of that color, and then the great shining sun burst forth.

Curious Pelican

The plutonic rocks behind us glowed redder than they really were. Even the cactus and catsclaw took on a rosy aura. I was walking toward camp with an arm-load of wood, when a lone pelican swam straight toward me. It came so close I was able to pat its back. It sounded like a hollow cardboard carton. I walked to where Nacho had a fire going, and the pelican followed three or four feet offshore. He was as curious about my actions as I his.

At breakfast, Nacho started talking about how calm the morning was and how it would be calm all day. Furthermore, he assured us, this was a good anchorage and he could take the boat out a way and anchor it bow and stern. It would certainly be lonely here on the beach waiting for the explorers to return, he added.

The Carmans and I held a conference. We decided that although Nacho was a boatman and therefore should stay with the boat, he had taken a chance in coming to the island with the bad engine, and he was certainly entitled to be in on the initial exploration of the palm canyon we had earlier sighted from the air.

"I could carry the shovel," he offered, "and anything else you would like carried."

We made our way up the long alluvial fan leading to the canyon entrance. The mouth of the gorge was about two miles from the beach. The going was rougher than it had looked to be from the air. Here was the sort of country through which there would have been a trail had this been an inhabited island. But, Angel de la Guarda supposedly has been uninhabited since its discovery by Francisco de Ulloa in 1539. Along with the lack of trail, however, was the absence of tissue on the bushes, and cigarette boxes and beer cans on the ground.

The first palms were scrubby and unkempt looking, not much taller than a man. They were the typical blue palm of Baja California, but reduced in size from trunk to leaf.



⬢ HILTON'S PAINTING OF WHISPERING CANYON APPEARED IN FULL-COLOR ON THE COVER OF DESERT MAGAZINE'S NOV. ISSUE.

LILLIAN AND GORDON CARMAN IN THE COCKPIT OF THEIR LIGHT PLANE. THEY ACCOMPANIED HILTON TO WHISPERING CANYON. ⬢



But for these palms and the giant cardon cacti growing with them, this could have been a canyon in the California desert. There were smoke trees, catsclaw, incense bush and many other familiar shrubs. Here and there were cacti which were completely different.

The next clump of palms appeared stronger and taller. There were a few ordinary green fan palms mixed with the blue palms, but the blue-gray ones predominated. We noticed fragments of agate, crystal and obsidian in the bed of the wash, and now began paying more attention to the walls of the canyon. In many places the cliffs were pitted with the open cavities of thin-walled geodes containing small quartz crystals and chalcedony. Higher up were bands of obsidian in place.

The canyon became deeper and narrower as we progressed. Catsclaw and other thorny bushes more often barred the way now, and the palms surrounded us by the hundreds. Nacho, scanning the floor of the sandy wash for tracks, found those of foxes and a small cat-like animal. There were thousands of tracks of a large black chuckawalla abundant on this island.

Trouble

Mrs. Carman was busy taking photos of everything around her. The doctor was helping Nacho look for tracks, and I was pecking away at rocks with my prospector's pick. We were all having the time of our lives, when I heard something unpleasantly familiar.

"Hold it, everyone," I urged. "There's a rattlesnake hereabouts."

We stood still, carefully looking for the reptile. The buzz had sounded very faint and quite a distance away. I was looking in a radius of 50 feet or more. When my eyes lowered, there was our snake—coiled, ready to strike—right at my feet! As soon as my eyes met the snake's, the rattle came again.

We were amazed. This was not the usual sharp buzz of a rattlesnake. It was, rather, a muffled whisper. The snake's color was almost exactly that of the buff-colored sand upon which it rested. The faintest of diamond patterns appeared on its back. The tail had six very distinct black-and-white bands, ending in a set of rattles that would have been small for a sidewinder—and this creature was two-and-a-half-feet in length.

Cicadas—those "hot weather" insects whose strident serenades are often deafening—were abundant in the upper reaches of the canyon. They sounded twice as menacing as the rattler, and kept us jumping.

I was examining a canyon wall shot

Continued on page 36

COTTONWOOD SPRINGS

By WALTER FORD

THE NAME "Cottonwood Spring" as applied to desert watering places is not particularly distinctive. In his Water Supply Paper 490-B (1921), David G. Thompson mentions three springs of that name on California's Mojave Desert alone, and Walter C. Mendenhall in his Water Supply Paper 224 adds two more to the list, one in Riverside County, Calif., and one in Southwestern Nevada. Arizona has a Cottonwood Springs in Navajo County—plus a town of Cottonwood, a couple of Cottonwood stations, two Cottonwood creeks, Cottonwood Cliffs, Cottonwood Mountain, Cottonwood Valley and three Cottonwood washes.

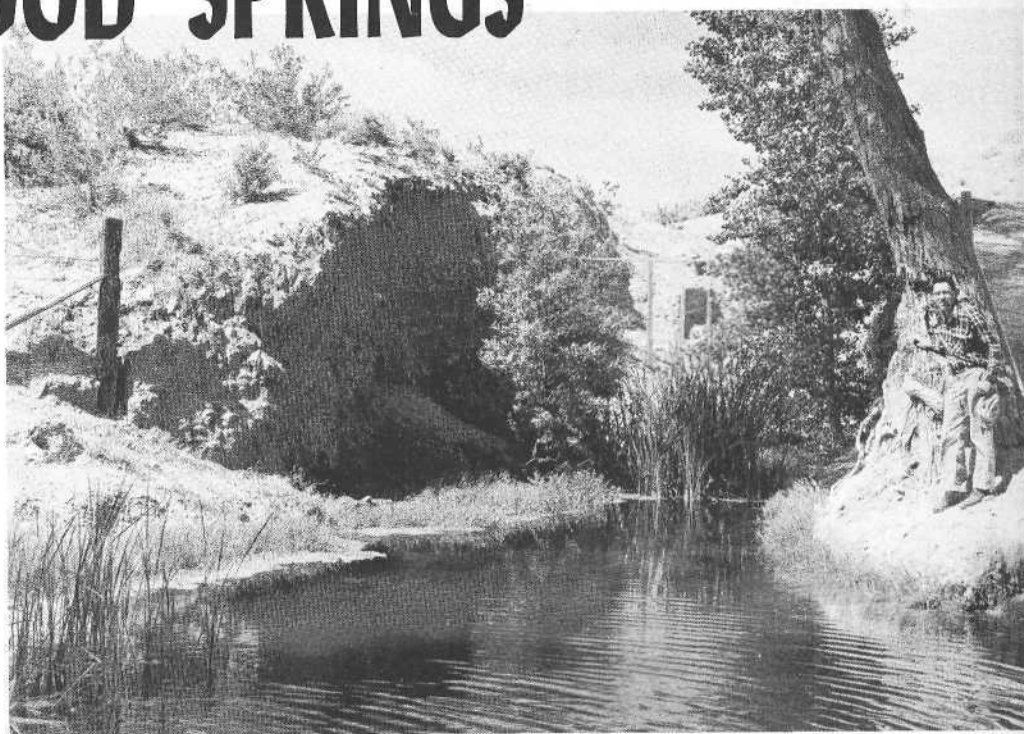
The Cottonwood Springs located on the Victorville-Twenty-nine Palms route has long been a dependable source of water and a favorite camping place for cattlemen and prospectors.

The origin of Cottonwood Springs is obscure. W. J. Johnson, an old-timer who has prospected in the area for years, told me he believes the spring was originally developed by Indians. When he first visited it 45 years ago, broken pottery, grinding stones and arrowpoints could be picked up at will.

According to the late Dix Van Dyke of Daggett, one of the last battles between Indians and white settlers was fought in Lucerne Valley, a short distance from Cottonwood Springs. In 1866 a group of volunteers from San Bernardino overtook and defeated a band of Paiute Indians who had committed depredations in the nearby San Bernardino Mountains. Outside of a small flare-up the following year when three cattlemen were killed, there was no more trouble with the Indians. By 1869 only 18 soldiers were needed at Camp Cady on the Mojave River, and soon after the post was abandoned.

When I first visited Cottonwood Springs it was my intention to remain only a few hours, but it seemed to be such an ideal camping spot that I decided to remain overnight. That was an unwise decision. The pool was swarming with frogs, and when darkness came their hoarse croakings reached such a crescendo that it was necessary to move out into the desert to assure my getting any sleep. I have heard some fancy frog choirs during my travels, but never one to equal the din which arose from Cottonwood Springs.

While I was preparing breakfast the next morning, two young fellows drove



... Oasis on the Mojave Desert

up to the springs in a pickup truck to fill their canteens. After introductions they said they were looking for the Lost Lee Lode and that they had a sure-fire lead to its location. The Lost Lee is one of the lesser-known lost mines of the desert region. Its legend goes about as follows:

During the '90s a prospector named Lee discovered a fabulous ledge of gold-bearing quartz in the Bullion Mountains 25 miles east of Cottonwood Springs. Lee made no attempt to conceal the location of the mine, in fact he supposedly recorded its location in San Bernardino.

One day Lee made a trip to San Bernardino for provisions, then started back to his mine at night to escape the heat. Next morning he was found a short distance out of San Bernardino, shot through the heart. His murderer was never apprehended.

Shortly after Lee's death, a frantic search for his mine began. He was known to have left a helper at the mine, but neither helper nor mine was ever located, despite the fact a large dump and an arrastra presumably were near the workings. Adding credence to the story is the fact that ex-Governor Waterman of California, an experienced mining man, offered a huge cash reward for a part interest in the mine after Lee's right to the claim had expired. Apparently, the reward was never claimed.

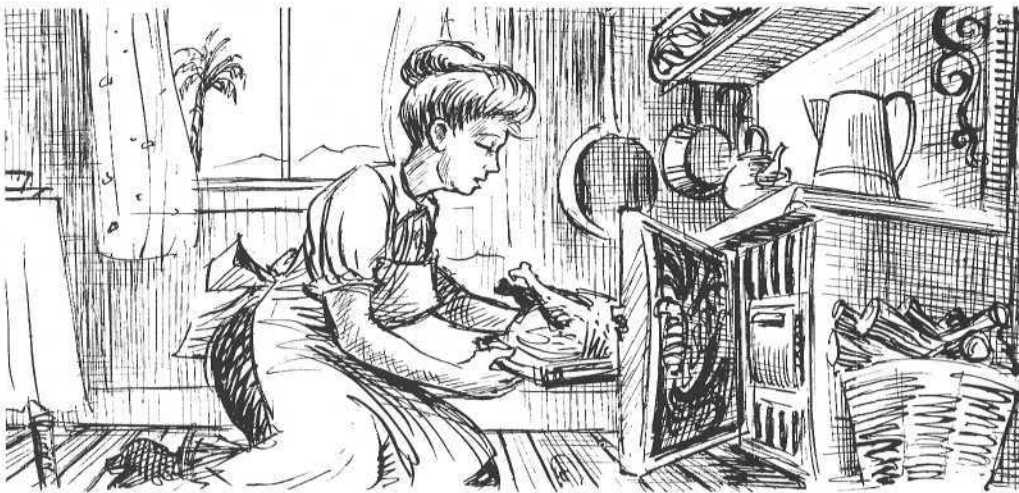
When I reached the turnoff from the Twenty-nine Palms road to Cottonwood Springs on a more recent visit, I was surprised to see a steam engine hauling several cars come chugging out of the desert, make a graceful turn near the springs, then disappear in the direction from which it had come. There, I thought, is a real desert mirage!

Close inspection, however, revealed the tracks to be of substantial steel and a newly erected sign designated the stop in typical railroad fashion as "Cottonwood Springs." I followed the tracks for three miles across the desert to Old Woman Springs. There the mystery was solved.

The railroad, which carries the official title, "Cottonwood and Southern," is the fulfillment of one man's dream to preserve the memories of the age of steam—an era in which he worked as a railroad fireman and engineer. J. Dale Gentry, operator of the unique railroad and owner of Old Woman Springs Ranch, has assembled all of the facilities and buildings that were a necessary part of the steam railroad terminal. Water tank, engine shed—they are all there—even a waiting room with grilled ticket window and wooden benches. Gentry's rolling stock consists of a 22-ton locomotive, two flat cars and a caboose. The cars have seats on which Gentry's guests enjoy the round trip to Cottonwood Springs.—END

Homestead Christmas--1880

By RUTH A. WESTPHAL



LET'S FORGET about high taxes, communism, and the race to land a man on the moon. In the early winter months of 1880, the only thing Grandmother fretted about was her Christmas dinner. So back to '80 we go — and Grandmother's wonderful wood burning stove.

The watered Southwestern valleys were being settled by a heavy wave of homesteaders. Through necessity, these farms were as self-sustaining as possible. A country place wasn't a country place without a few fruit trees and a garden, and a few chickens, pigs and a cow or two.

Grandmother began planning her Christmas dinner as soon as she was sure everyone in the family had gotten through the Fourth of July celebration reasonably uninjured. Pickles, jellies, dried fruit and vegetables were preserved in the late summer and fall. The jars that looked "real nice" were set on a special

shelf — not to be opened until Christmas. By early winter, the jewel-like fruits of Grandmother's labor stood in rows in the cellar, and hung from rafters in the attic. There was even elderberry wine from wild bushes that grew along the stream.

Before winter "set in," Grandfather made the long trip by wagon to town for supplies. He bought enough to last through the cold months — flour and sugar by the hundred pounds, Arbuckle's coffee by the case in one pound sacks to be ground as needed, raisins by the box. In her order, sent with Grandfather, Grandmother included a few "pure luxuries" for holiday treats: spices, candied fruits, currants and nuts.

Late in October, when the weather had turned cold enough, Grandfather butchered three hogs. Some of the neighbor men came over to help. Before the sun was up, the water was heating

in the huge iron kettles. The steam sent up clouds in the frosty air as the men secured block and tackle to a big limb of a nearby tree. A table of wooden planks was improvised on two saw horses.

When the water reached the scalding point (from 140 to 144 degrees F.), the first hapless porker was urged out to the tree and slaughtered. Then the scalding water was transferred to a wooden barrel, and the lifeless pig immersed therein. The carcass was lifted to the table, cleaned and split down the backbone. Then it was the second pig's turn.

Next morning the huge carcasses were cut-up for curing. Great hams and shoulders, bacons, ribs and meat for sausage were removed. The children cubed the pure white fat and placed it in one of the huge black kettles to be rendered into lard.

The Southwest has a warm climate so Grandfather used a dry sugar cure on the meat. The process took six weeks—in time for Christmas.

Grandmother started her holiday baking on the first day of December: cakes, cookies and a big plum

pudding to be reheated and brought to the table in flaming glory. Candy was a rare treat so the children were allowed to make taffy and popcorn balls just before the big day. They strung the popcorn, and helped Grandmother decorate ginger cookies to trim the Christmas tree.

And now for the dinner. Below are some of the recipes Grandmother used.

ROAST WILD TURKEY

Wild turkey is cleaned and dressed in the same manner as domestic turkey. Scald, pick, singe and remove pin feathers. Draw. Wash thoroughly.

Rub outside and inside of bird with salt. Place small amount of dressing in neck. Lightly stuff body cavity with dressing. Do not pack. Truss and grease entire body thoroughly using butter or lard. Lay a cloth which has been soaked in butter or lard over top of bird. Place breast-down on rack in roaster. Cook at constant low temperature, 325 degrees Fahrenheit, for 20 to 25 minutes per pound. Turn breast up when one-fourth cooking time remains. Do not cover roaster, and add no water. If cloth becomes dry, re-soak with butter or lard. Turkey is done when joint moves easily or meat feels tender to pinch.

* * *

SAGE DRESSING

(For 12 pound turkey)
3 quarts cubed day-old bread

1 cup butter
¾ cup finely chopped onion
1½ cup chopped celery (stalks and leaves)
2 teaspoons salt
½ teaspoon pepper
2 teaspoons sage
¾ cup turkey or chicken broth

Melt butter in two large skillets, add onion and celery and cook until tender. Stir in cubed bread. Add seasonings and mix. Add broth. Heat, stirring to prevent excessive browning. When moisture seems to be gone, remove dressing from heat. Cool.

Ruth H. Westphal first traveled and camped in the Southwest in the early 1920s—on a family outing in search of good land to farm. Her parents decided on Phoenix—and that's where Mrs.

Westphal was raised. Later she attended Arizona State College at Flagstaff where she received her degree in Education, with a major in Home Economics.

BAKED COUNTRY HAM

Take a 12 to 15 pound country ham and soak 12 to 24 hours in cold water, changing once. Then put ham into kettle and cover with boiling water. Add one pint cider and a little parsley. Simmer slowly for two or three hours, until ham is very tender.

When cool enough to handle, remove ham from water, take off rind and all fat exceeding 1/2-inch thickness. Also remove the dark outside from the part not covered by the rind. Make a glaze of one cup each molasses, vinegar and cider. Place ham in roasting pan with rack, drizzle on glaze. Bake ham in 325 degree Fahrenheit oven for 30 minutes. Add rest of glaze in two or three applications. Don't baste with glaze that has run down pan—it will taste burnt and ruin glaze.

* * *

FRUIT CAKE

- 1 pound seeded raisins
- 1 1/2 cups water
- 1 1/2 cups sugar
- 1/2 cup butter
- 2 1/2 cups sifted flour
- 1/4 pound candied citron, sliced thin
- 1/4 pound candied cherries, cut fine
- 1/4 pound candied lemon peel, cut fine
- 1/4 pound candied orange peel, sliced thin
- 1 cup candied pineapple, cut fine
- 1 cup chopped nuts
- 1 cup chopped dates
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- 1/2 teaspoon cloves
- 1/2 teaspoon allspice
- 2 beaten eggs

Wash raisins and cook with water and sugar for 5 minutes, add butter and set aside to cool. Sift flour, soda, and spices together, add chopped fruits, and nuts to flour mixture. Beat eggs until light, add to raisin mixture, then add to flour mixture (makes a rather thin batter). Put into pan lined with oiled paper. Bake at 325 degrees Fahrenheit for 1 1/2 to 2 1/2 hours. Test with tooth pick to see if done. When cool, wrap in wine-dampened

cloth to "keep" and mellow. Store in air-tight container in cool place.

Before serving glaze and decorate. Combine 1/2 cup light corn syrup and 1/4 cup water and bring just to a rolling boil. Remove from heat. Cool to lukewarm. Pour over cold cake. Dip under side of candied fruits in sugar water syrup and press lightly into top surface of cake.

* * *

SPICED CIDER

- 2 2-inch sticks cinnamon
- 1/2 cup brown sugar, packed
- 10 whole cloves
- 2 quarts cider
- Grated nutmeg

Tie cinnamon and cloves together in cheesecloth. In large saucepan, combine cider, brown sugar; heat. Add spice bag; simmer 10 minutes, or until cider is spicy enough to suit taste. Remove bag.

Serve piping hot in mugs, with dash of grated nutmeg on top of each. Makes 7 to 8 servings. May be served chilled.

* * *

PLUM PUDDING

- 1 pound beef suet, chopped fine
- 1 pound currants
- 1 pound raisins
- 5 cups sifted flour
- 1/2 teaspoon cloves
- 1/2 teaspoon cinnamon
- 1/2 teaspoon nutmeg
- 1 tablespoon salt
- 1 cup molasses
- 2 cups sugar
- 7 eggs
- 1 cup sweet milk

Sift dry ingredients together, add to fruit and suet and mix well together, then moisten the mixture with the 7 eggs, well beaten, and sweet milk; stir well. Take a piece of cotton cloth, big enough to double over, put it in boiling water, squeeze out all the water, and flour it; turn out your mixture in the cloth, and tie it up tight (good cooks used to sew up their pudding bags). It can't be squeezed too much, for a loosely tied pudding is a soggy thing because it won't cook dry. Put in boiling water, and let boil four hours. Add more boiling water if

needed. Serve hot. May be reheated over hot water.

* * *

PLUM PUDDING SAUCE

- 2 cups sugar
- 2 cups boiling water
- Butter size of an egg (4 tablespoons)
- 2 tablespoons corn-starch
- 1 cup cold water
- 3 tablespoons good vinegar, brandy or wine

Dissolve sugar in boiling water; work 2 tablespoons cornstarch smooth in 1 cup cold water, and stir into boiling sugar; add the butter and cook until clear; then add the vinegar, brandy or wine. Serve over portions of plum pudding.

* * *

OLD FASHIONED COUNTRY SAUSAGE

Requires 20 pounds fresh pork, 3/4 lean, 1/4 fat. Grind or chop meat. Season with 4 tablespoons salt, 2 tablespoons black pepper, and boiling water that has been poured over a cloth bag containing 18 cloves of minced garlic (if you prefer sage flavor to garlic, use 1 1/2 ounces sage in place of garlic).

Stuff the sausage in muslin bags 3 inches in diameter and 15 inches long, and allow to hang in a cool place for 24 to 48 hours. Smoke and dry in a cool smokehouse for one or two days. Chill, dry and paraffin the casing. Must be kept cool.

* * *

DRIED APPLE PIE

- 1 pound dried apples
- 2 cups sugar
- Water
- 3 teaspoons cinnamon
- Rind of lemon or 1/2 teaspoon lemon extract
- 1 recipe of pastry
- Butter

Cover dried apples with water and soak over night. Add rind of lemon and more water if necessary, and boil until soft. Put through colander, add sugar and cinnamon. Line pie tin with pastry and pour cooled mixture into tin. Dot with butter. Cover with top crust, or with strips of pastry. The dried apple filling should be only 1/2 inch deep. Bake in a hot

oven 450 degrees Fahrenheit for 10 minutes, then reduce heat to 350 degrees Fahrenheit and bake 30 minutes longer.

* * *

OLD FASHIONED MOLASSES TAFFY

- 2 tablespoons butter
- 1 cup brown sugar
- 2 cups molasses
- 1 tablespoon vinegar
- 1/3 cup water

Pinch of baking soda

Combine the ingredients and boil until a small amount cracks when dropped into cold water. Pour into a buttered pan and allow to cool enough for handling. Oil the finger tips and take up a small amount of the candy at one time. Pull until it becomes light in color. Twist and cut into 1-inch pieces.

* * *

POPCORN BALLS

- 10 large ears popcorn
- 2 1/2 cups soft white sugar
- 1 tablespoon molasses
- 1 tablespoon butter
- 1 tablespoon vinegar
- 1 cup boiling water
- 1 teaspoon baking powder

Pop the corn and remove any unpopped kernels. Place popped corn in a large dish. Combine the sugar, vinegar, molasses and butter. Dissolve the baking powder in the boiling water. Combine the two mixtures and boil for 20 minutes without stirring. When the syrup spins a thread, pour it over the popcorn, mix thoroughly and shape quickly into balls.

* * *

GINGER COOKIES

- 1 cup sugar
- 1 cup butter
- 1 cup molasses
- 1 tablespoon ginger
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- 1 teaspoon cloves
- Enough flour to make a stiff dough
- 2 teaspoons baking soda dissolved in
- 3 tablespoons hot water

Cream butter and sugar together. Add molasses and water with soda dissolved in it. Add sifted dry ingredients. Chill, roll, cut, and bake in 400 degree Fahrenheit oven.—END

Hard-Working Desert Denizens



By EDMUND C. JAEGER

Curator of Plants, Riverside Municipal Museum

PERSISTENCE IS A characteristic of many lower animals, often enabling them to accomplish amazing feats and much profitable work.

Recently I stopped in a small sandy wash to watch a big black eleodid or circus beetle (the kind that stands on its head) trying to make his way to the top of a steep three-foot-high sand and gravel bank. Time and again—with utmost patience—he made the attempt, generally getting no farther than half-way up the loose slope before the sand caved beneath his feet to send him tumbling to the bottom. He then tried several new routes with no better results. Finally he made a wide diversion that gave him good traction, and once on top off he went in a straight line to the shelter of some bushes. I was impressed by the doggedness this insect brought to bear on his problem.

Many years ago I picked up a soft-furred baby kangaroo rat (*Dipodomys*) from beneath some brush in the High Desert. I judged it to be between two and three weeks old. Already it was very agile and eating seeds, and, at times, carrying a few extra ones in its fur-lined cheek pouches.

Like all “dipos” it became a most interesting and gentle pet. For awhile it was a big eater of fruit, especially cherries, but as it grew older only dry grain was taken. I used to let it loose in my room to romp with a baby jackrabbit, especially about sundown when both small animals proved to be veritable imps at play.

As “Dipo” became older, it spent daylight hours curled up in a small box which it had stuffed near-full with cotton waste. But, at night Dipo was a little terror, throwing sand around in its cage so furiously that it rained generously on the floor outside the cage.

In one corner of my room I kept a small one-pound cardboard box filled with seeds (barley, sunflower and wheat) for my pet. One day I inadvertently left Dipo’s cage door open. He went forth on explorations, found the

food container, and forthwith gnawed a hole in it. Discovery of this food bonanza let loose strange ideas in Dipo’s brain, and by morning my gnome had completely emptied the box — transferring the 3000 odd seeds eight feet across the room! Since his little cheek pouches could not possibly have held more than 20 or 30 seeds—even when crammed to capacity—I estimated that he must have made at least 125 hurried trips across the room and back, a total distance of more than a quarter of a mile. That’s a first class record of exemplary endeavor, surely removing Dipo at once from the “lazy bones” category.

This experience parallels that of a hotel-keeping friend of mine who put an opened box of lump laundry starch in a storeroom to which, unknown to her, a pack rat found entrance that night. Next morning the box was completely empty—every one of the many lumps of starch, along with other small movable objects, having been removed and deposited in a corner at the opposite end of the long room. This penchant the pack rat has for carrying objects is well-known, but not always appreciated is this rodent’s capacity for continuous and repeated attention to hard work.

I have often been amazed at the diligence of parent birds in procuring food for the young in the nest. Of course, equally astounding is the large amount of food the fast-growing birds are able to digest. One April I watched the feeding activities of a pair of Say’s phoebes that had made a nest of horsehair, string and grasses on a shelf in a dilapidated shack. From very early morning until almost dark the parent birds averaged between them a food-bearing trip about every five minutes, with few let-ups. That’s a good day’s work—and there was no evident sign of fatigue or complaint, either.

To test a spider’s patience, I once played “tear and patch” with a big handsome spider that had built its large and marvelously beautiful lacy web in a thorn-bush near my camp. By watching her initial construction efforts,

I had full appreciation of the amount of skillful work and meticulous care expended in the web's construction. Every morning for over two weeks I made a hand-sized tear in the orb — and by late evening the spider repaired it so that it was as beautifully-patterned and good as new. One would think she would have become discouraged—but not this creature. She would keep her "nest" where she had chosen to put it, regardless.

John Burroughs tells of a frugal woodpecker whose mind was wholly bent on storing acorns for the winter. The bird deposited its acorns in a hole it had drilled completely through a wall high under the gable of a house. Hour after hour, day after day, the diligent but foolish bird dropped the acorns through the hole—never realizing that there was no way to recover them from the big hollow attic.

Akin to this was the action of a pair of Say's phoebes that tried to build their nest in a two-foot length of rusty stovepipe dangling from a wire atop a shanty I once occupied. The pipe was open at both ends, but the birds settled on this site and began bringing in bits of dry dung and pieces of string for the construction of the nest. Always when they carried in these materials they alighted at the upper end of the stovepipe, and, watching intently with heads turned to one side, dropped the pieces of dry dung through the pipe to the ground below. On that first evening upon returning to camp, I found several quarts of dung chips below the pipe. This represented an enormous amount of foolish ill-planned avian industry.

Each day for almost a week this act was repeated, until, feeling sorry for the birds' unrewarding endeavors, I stuffed a crumpled newspaper half-way up the stovepipe. The birds forthwith completed the nest on the newspaper platform, and successfully raised a brood of four birdlings.

Once birds have "set their mind" on migration, almost nothing will deter them from making the long hazardous flight. Certain hummingbirds that winter far south in Mexico perform unbelievable flight efforts, moving on swift wings for hundreds of miles across the food-barren Gulf of California and Pacific waters to their summer homes in the interior and coastal areas of California. In April and May the white-winged doves make an arduous flight north from interior Mexico to the deserts of southwestern Arizona, southeastern California and northeastern Baja California. The vibrant-songed Gambel's sparrows brave long flights to move from their summer nesting sites in northern California, Oregon, Washington and mountainous western Canada to find warm winter feeding grounds on our often bleak southern deserts. Roving flocks of pinyon jays are constantly shifting from one area to another seeking new sources of food. What always impresses me is the enormous amount of energy and industry involved in all of these movements, and how ingenious and persistent the birds are in gaining their desired ends.

Many small birds—even berated ones such as English sparrows—are not wholly instinctive unreasoning creatures as some people believe them to be. One early spring I placed a small birdhouse atop a six-foot post, hoping to attract some house wrens. To my surprise I had a pair with me before a week passed. The wrens gained access to the birdhouse by passing through a round opening which I calculated was large enough for their small bodies, but too small for sparrows.

The spirited expressive songs of the male wren now were heard as he triumphantly and gayly advertised his territorial rights. But his joys were short-lived because of a pair of covetous English sparrows that also decided my birdhouse was an ideal place for housekeeping.

That I'd miscalculated on the proper size for an entranceway was soon apparent. The sparrows not only dispossessed the wrens, they tore up the wrens' partly-

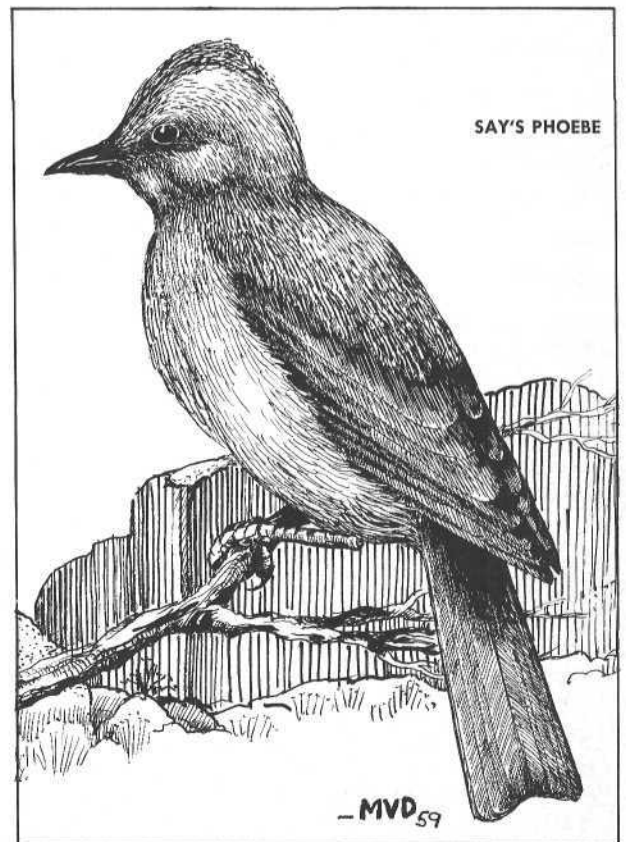
completed nest, dumped all the materials on the ground, and brought in feathers and straws to make a nest of their own liking. The evicted wrens dejectedly stayed around. As soon as I opened up the box and threw out the sparrow nest, the wrens almost immediately repossessed the birdhouse.

In order to prevent a recurrence of robbery by the sparrows, I reduced the size of the entrance by fastening a small strip of wood across the lower part of the hole with two broad-headed carpet tacks. Not to be foiled by this procedure, the sparrow rascals pulled at the protruding tack-heads with their beaks, pried loose the slat, and again drove the wrens out.

When I returned home I repeated my part in the drama by evicting the usurpers. This time using long headless nails, I again attached the piece of wood over the lower part of the doorway. This did the trick.

The plucky wrens were as persistent in the battle as were the sparrows and, undismayed, again moved in to rebuild their nest. I am glad to report that the first and rightful owners now successfully reared their young. The sparrows were not at all happy about the affair, and for several days annoyed the wrens by swooping down over the birdhouse. Assisted by other members of the flock, they made a series of erratic flights over the house; moreover, they noisily chirped and "screeched" every time the male wren came up to enter the birdhouse.

Seeing all this, I concluded that birds also have their very serious moments of ups-and-downs in life. Fortunately, they forget the "downs" sooner than humans do, and perhaps on the whole live lives of much less stress and anxiety.—END



MATEO OF SANTO DOMINGO, pueblo trader and jeweler, has long been a familiar figure on the sidewalks of Santa Fe and Albuquerque. Since he likes to trade his wares in town, he is fortunate that his village, the largest and one of the oldest of the Rio Grande pueblos, is just off U.S. Highway 85, 36 paved miles from Albuquerque, 26 from Santa Fe. So many tourists visit Santo Domingo that Mateo could probably sell all of his jewelry without leaving the pueblo, but being a born trader and a naturally gregarious man, he prefers doing part of his selling and trading outside the village.

He never has to stand beside the highway more than a few minutes before someone offers him a ride. By the time Mateo reaches his destination, invariably he has made

some new friends and, more likely than not, has sold them a pair of earrings, a heavy silver bracelet that has just been cast, or a string of turquoise. It is also possible that he has traded them one of the colorful blankets he always has flung over his shoulder when he goes to town.

Mateo has never liked to drive. I suspect one reason is he can make sales as a passenger, but would be wasting time driving to town alone. His explanation is a different one, and shows his keen sense of humor. Once when his brother was away for several months and left his pickup truck at Mateo's house, I asked Mateo why he didn't drive the truck to town. When he answered there was a twinkle in his black eyes.

"If I drove," he said, "I might drive like all the other crazy Indians."

Before Mateo invited me to visit the pueblo, we had chatted several times on the sidewalks of Santa Fe about turquoise jewelry and Navajo rugs; about high prices and dry weather.

The first time I went to his house in the village he was not at home. His mother stopped frying tortillas in the corner fireplace and greeted me with a broad smile. Though she does not speak much English, she had no trouble making me understand that she wanted me to join her for a cup of coffee. As we sipped our hot coffee and exchanged smiles and sign language, I thought that we were communicating very well. I had understood from her pointing and nodding that Mateo was at the corral and would return soon. He did not return, but luckily, as we were starting on our third cup of coffee, his daughter, Irene, came home from school in Bernalillo and explained that Mateo had gone to Jemez Pueblo to trade and would not be home for three days. Since then Mateo's mother and I have perfected a sign language system that is much more satisfactory, and we now visit without any difficulty and with little misunderstanding.

It was a cold gray day in January the next time I visited Santo Domingo. There was deep snow on the ground and a cold wind was blowing from the northeast, but Mateo was busily making earrings at his workshop on a chair in front of a cozy fire in the corner fireplace. Everything he needed was on a kitchen chair and I was intrigued by the compactness and efficiency of his unique work shop. He sat on a low stool as he fashioned jewelry at his workbench. After drilling a piece of turquoise with a sharp hand drill, he was able to polish the stones without having to move from his comfortable stool in front of the fireplace.

Mateo maintains that independence is the key to happiness, and advises his young friends in the pueblo to work for themselves. After he finished classes at the Indian School in Santa Fe, he began working the family farm west of the pueblo. Over the years he has perfected his skill as a craftsman and pursued his talents as a trader until today he has very little time for farming.

He is very civic minded and has served on the Irrigation Committee, the Education Committee and the Village Council. While the attractive new pueblo-style school was being finished at Santo Domingo last year, Mateo was so busy with it that he had hardly any time left over for his own work. His civic interests often take him on trips to neighboring towns and states. These trips are also opportunities to make new friends and to do some trading. A mutual friend of ours who comes from Santa Clara was telling me recently about a meeting he attended with Mateo in Salt Lake City.

"Every time the meeting would get dull," the Santa Clara community leader said, "We'd miss Mateo, but we wouldn't have to look far before we'd find him visiting with someone on the street or trading with someone in a hotel lobby."—END

MATEO

Santo Domingo's Artistic Trader

BY MARY BRANHAM



MATEO CAN POLISH AND DRILL TURQUOISE AT HIS WORKBENCH WITHOUT EVER HAVING TO MOVE FROM HIS STOOL IN FRONT OF THE FIRE.

Christmas Greetings

from The Desert Country

These Constant Stars

By MAUDE RUBIN

In the desert of old Judea where
the wind is never still

Sand heaps its shimmering patterns
into mountain range and hill;

Great peaks that gleam in the moon-
light are gone in the morning sun,

Hills that loom in the moonlight lie
level when day is done.

Drifting and ever drifting, these
centuries of sand,

Shifting and ever shifting, a tran-
sient phantom land.

Yet the stars that hung o'er Bethle-
hem still give their silver light,

Unchanged since the holiest Christ-
mas . . . these stars above me
tonight.



Yucca



Strawberry
Hedgehog
Cactus
Blooms

. . . The desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose. *Isaiah 35:1*



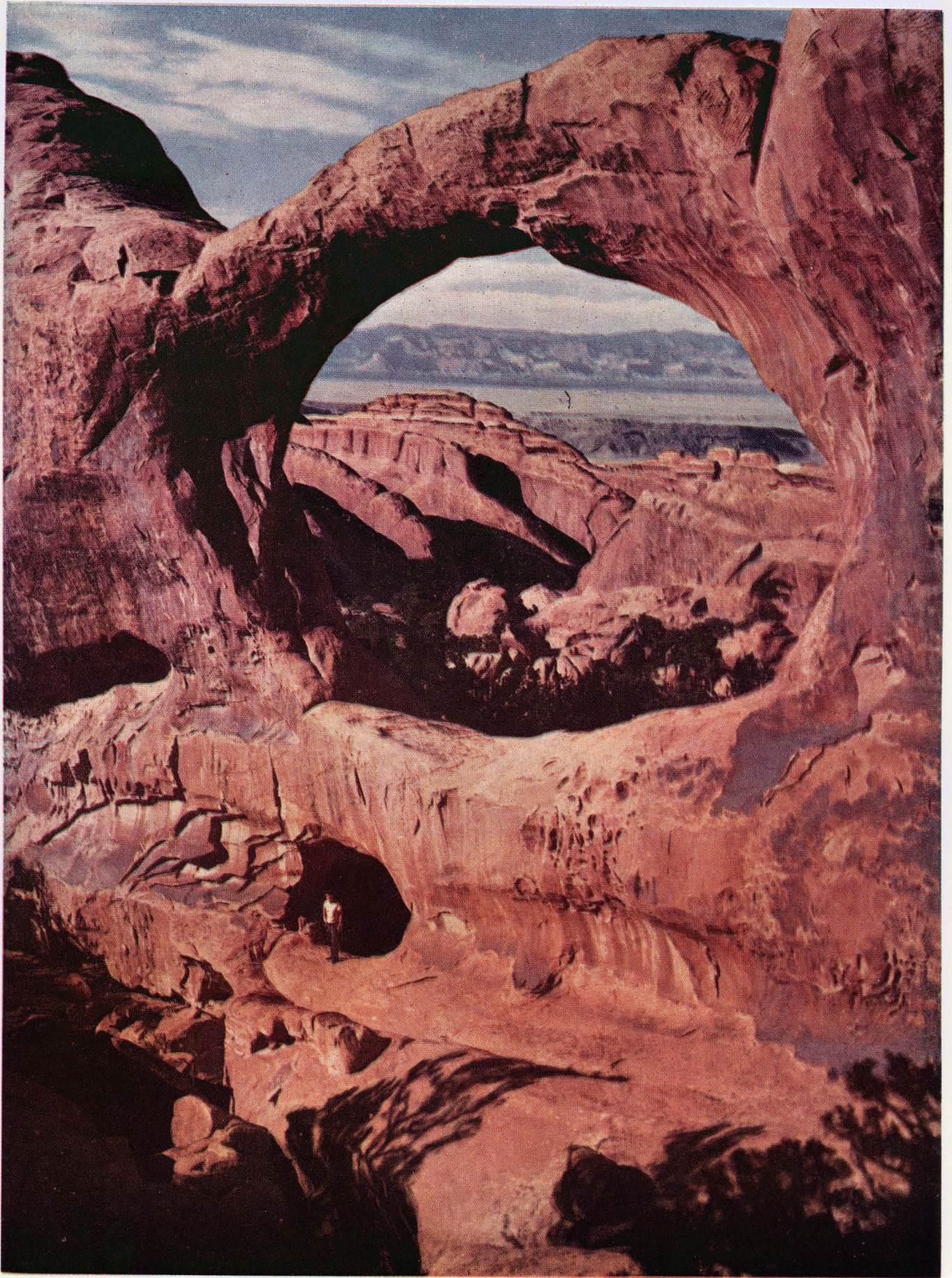
Blossom
of Prickly
Pear
Cactus

As the lily among thorns . . . *Solomon 2:2*



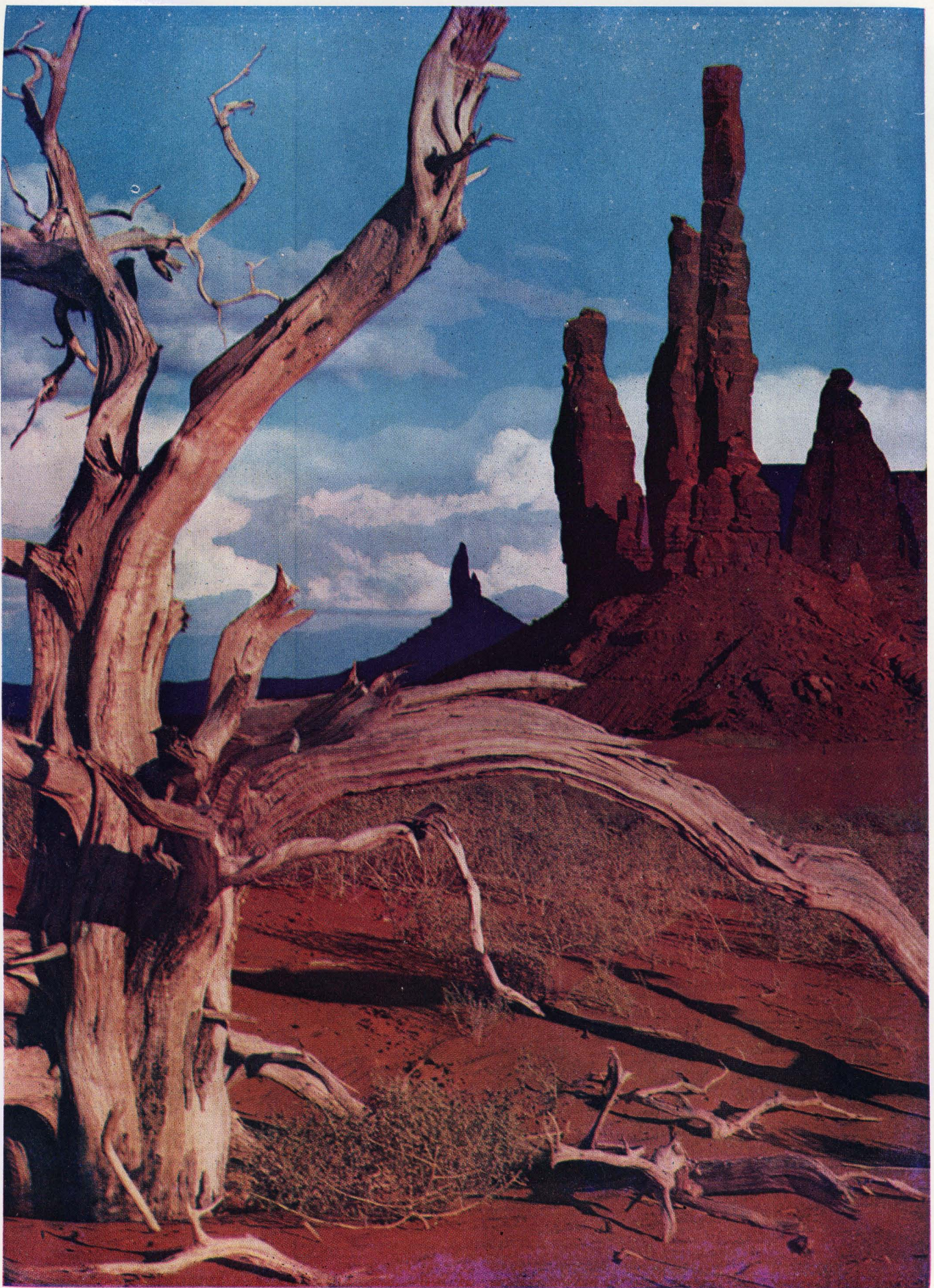
Young
Navajo
Shepherdess
of Monument
Valley

And he said unto them, Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place, and rest awhile . . . *Mark 6:31*



Double-O
Arch in
Arches
National
Monument

The waters wear the stones . . . *Job 14:19*



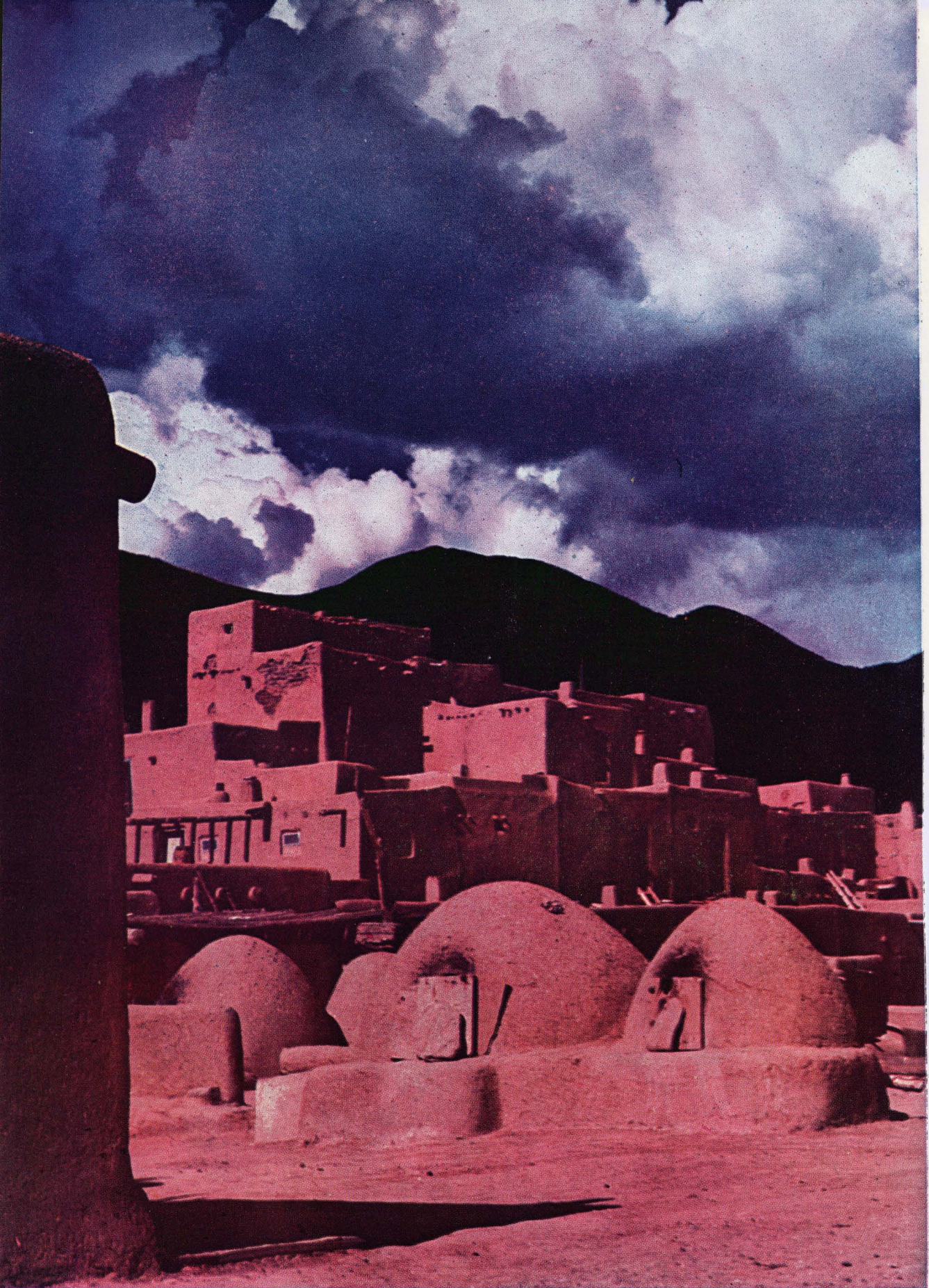
Monument
Valley

A land which the Lord thy God careth for: the eyes of the Lord thy God are always upon it, from the beginning of the year even unto the end of the year. *Deuteronomy 11:12*



Ocotillo
Blossoms

To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven. *Ecclesiastes 3:1*



Peace be
within thy
walls, and
prosperity
within thy
palaces.

Psalms 122:7

Storm
Over
Taos
Pueblo

This color section of Desert Magazine was prepared as a special Christmas supplement. Extra copies of this eight-page insert, with suitable envelope for mailing, can be ordered by sending stamps money order or personal check to:

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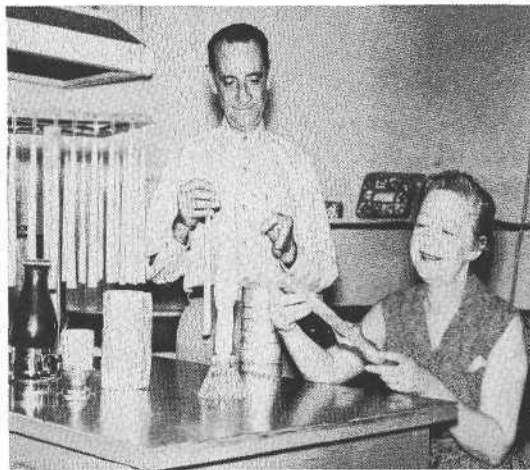
Candlemakers of New Mexico

By AMY PASSMORE HURT



⌂ LUMINARIAS DECORATING PARK
PATH FORM AVENUES OF BEAUTY

IGNACIO AND CELIA URANGA ➡



IGNACIO AND Celia Uranga, who follow the ancient craft of candlemaking in their tiny Albuquerque factory, take pride and pleasure in their work.

"Actually," says diminutive blue-eyed Celia, "we have as much fun making candles the year-around as do the many amateurs who feel the candlemaking urge at Christmas time. We never want our business to expand to the point where we can't personally supervise every step of it."

But, like the amateurs, the Urangas are busiest during the pre-Christmas season when they often keep their plant running 24 hours a day. At this time they hire extra help to assist in making and packaging their products—candles that find their way into churches, public buildings and private homes throughout the Southwest.

While candles have been used since time immemorial, their use has spread widely in this age of the electric lamp—a paradox explained by such items as the patio candle. Of recent origin, this household fixture with a Southwestern flavor is now the Urangas' biggest seller. "And what meal isn't made more festive when eaten by candlelight?" asks Ignacio. "And for weddings," he smiles, "candles are being used more and more."

Celia and Ignacio have been making candles together for 18 years, but their business had its beginning more than a quarter of a century ago when Ignacio's elder brother, the Rev. Salvador Uranga, made votive candles ("given by vow"—candles burnt as a devotional service, usually before a religious shrine) for the little church he served in Canutillo, Texas.

Ignacio assisted the priest in this project, and when Salvador died, Ignacio and his sister, Margaret, carried on what had become a small business, supplying several churches in the area with religious candles. Later, when Ignacio married pretty Celia Terrazos of El Paso, and they moved to New Mexico, the newlyweds borrowed a 12-candle mold from Margaret and began making a few candles to eke out a living until Ignacio could decide what he wanted to do "full time."

"Our daily output was only four dozen votive candles a day," Ignacio recalls. "To our surprise, an Albuquerque drug store bought our first offerings—and ordered more. In no time we were in business."

Today the Urangas manufacture more than a half-million candles a year—candles of every kind and description — votive, floating, carafe (coffee warmers), patio, ceremonial, and *luminarias*.

They are proud of the fact that they supply 75 percent of the thousands of *luminaria* candles that turn Albuquerque into a fairyland of lights during the Christmas season. "No other city in the world uses as many *luminaria* candles at this time," Celia points out. "In one four-block area alone, 7000 *luminarias* were burnt last Christmas Eve."

The use of *luminarias* stems from early Spanish times when pitchwood bonfires were kept burning Christmas Eve to light the way for the *Santo Nino*—the Christ Child. Modern *luminarias* use brown paper bags partially filled with sand, in each of which is embedded a 15-hour candle. When outlining roof-tops, driveways and adobe walls, the effect of these lighted "lanterns" is breathtakingly beautiful.

In addition to the above-mentioned candle types, the Urangas make several "specialty numbers"—a large floating candle, eight-inches in diameter, for swimming pool illumination; and a hand-decorated Christmas "snowball" candle.

Each kind of candle requires a different paraffin formula and wick. "Both altitude and climate where the candle is to be burned must be taken into consideration," explains Ignacio. "Candles made for the mountain regions of New Mexico require a different formula and thicker wick than candles that will be used in Los Angeles."

Obviously, there is more to this business of making candles than meets the eye! But, amateur candlemakers can turn out very satisfactory candles by using empty milk cartons, gelatin molds and other common containers for molds.

"As for decoration," Celia says, "use colored sequins, gold or silver glitter, sprigs of holly and evergreens—anything 'Christmasy.'" Dipping holly and evergreen twigs in melted paraffin before applying to the candles adds to their attractiveness.

If making candles in a mold is too tame, try the hand-dipping method. All that is required is a long wick, a pot of melted paraffin, and plenty of patience and perseverance. The wick is repeatedly dipped in the paraffin until the desired thickness is achieved.

The Urangas carry on the fine tradition of their craft. Perfectionists, they scrutinize each candle as it comes from the mold, discarding those that do not come up to the standards they have set.

Their greatest desire is to see their three young sons carry on the business. "Meanwhile," says Celia, "Ignacio and I enjoy working together. Not many businesses would permit that."—END

READER RESPONSE

A Right To Be There . . .

Desert:

In reference to Harry C. James' perturbation over showing a horse and rider below Havasu Falls on the August issue cover: he might be even more irritated to learn that hundreds of tourists swim in the pool every year, leaving their litter of garbage and beer cans behind.

The models used in the cover photo were a Havasupai Indian and his animals,

who have more right to be there than anyone else. Then too, what better way to show the immense size of these taller-than-Niagara falls?

STEWART CASSIDY
Prescott, Arizona

Wanted: Bigger Maps . . .

Desert:

I have never had a gripe before, concerning my favorite magazine—but, please,

if you must write articles about "cities" such as Apple Valley, etc., fine—but give us back the big-size maps—if only for the field trips. I have kept every one of them for years because they are so exact and the details so correct. We have always felt secure in following them into remote places.

Magnifying glasses are fine for use on rock specimens, but not for reading maps.
EDITH L. ELMS
National City, Calif.

Purple Glass Fans . . .

Desert:

My 15-year-old son and I spent part of our vacation digging in an old dump for purple glass, and so we were really thrilled to read the article in the October issue on this subject. We had never seen anything in print about purple glass before. Guess what we're going to do on our vacation next year?

VIVIAN BRANT
Sylmar, Calif.

Cleaning Purple Glass . . .

Desert:

I have received a number of letters in response to the purple glass article in the October *Desert Magazine*. Most frequently asked question is, "How can purple glass be cleaned?"

A dull film on old glass is quite common. This is usually an alkali residue from high-alkali content glass. In the trade we call it "bloom."

I recommend the use of a solution of one part vinegar to one part water. Allow the specimen to soak in this solution for at least 20 minutes. If this doesn't work, try a stronger mixture: one part muriatic acid to nine parts water. After immersion, wash thoroughly in warm water and liquid detergent.

W. J. MATHEWS, general manager
Brock Glass Company, Ltd.
Santa Ana, Calif.

A Vote for "River Rat" . . .

Desert:

Hurrah for Randall Henderson! "Doc" Marston and I have been feuding about his "canyoncers" for several years. The word doesn't mean a darn thing.

MARY BECKWITH
Van Nuys, Calif.

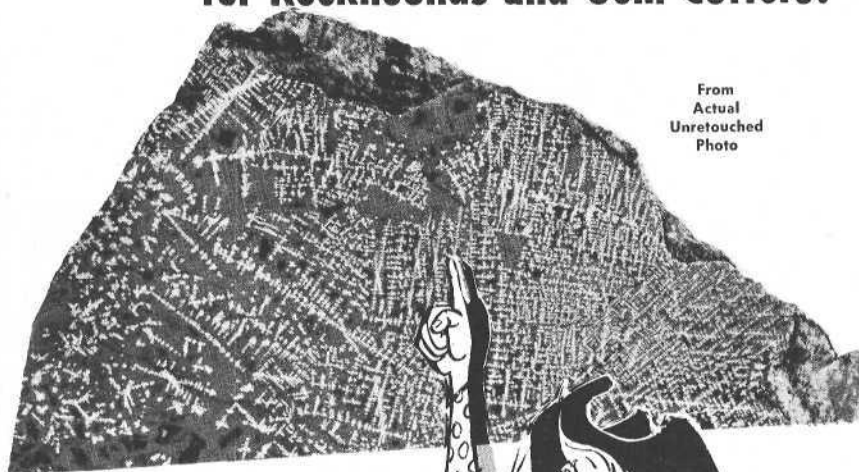
A "Historeer" Speaks Up . . .

Desert:

Heaven forbid that Randall Henderson should have anxieties about possibly feuding with me over my use of the word "canyoncer" in place of "river rat" (Oct. editorial). I respect Randall's opinions and value his friendship too highly.

He designates me a "modernist"—and to

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Write for Reservations

WETHERILL INN KAYENTA
ARIZONA

this name I make no objection (in 1949 Norman Nevils judged me too old to handle a pair of oars). But, recognizing that historians have few friends and must stand together for protection, I have joined with Frederick Samuel Dellenbaugh in using the classic name, "canyoner." If Randall is "agin" such "modernists" as Dellenbaugh, then show me a "river rat" on the fast water of the Colorado who predates him. I quit the "rodent" classification in '51 and became a "row-don't"—exclusively devoted to the use of power in fast water.

OTIS "DOC" MARSTON
Berkeley, Calif.

The Everlasting Desert . . .

Desert:

As a practical Westerner by birth, as a desert lover by experience, and as an avid and constant reader of your magazine, I am greatly obligated to express to you words of compliment, congratulations and approval as each new issue comes to hand.

The file of former issues is precious, inspiring, and helpful as those who come to know the material which has been presented establish acquaintance with that material. But as the desert is much the same yet ever changing, so the growth of your magazine in all of its aspects, each one of which presents itself as a feature, is particularly deserving of recommendation, compliment, and commendation.

There is a ring of sincerity about desert information that reflects the integrity of desert personalities. There is a vivid truthfulness in all reporting in the matter of desert and even Southwest living. As an old-time desert friend of mine once said when we were talking about the possibility of those who had misbehaved in society going out to the desert and getting lost: no one whose heart and mind was not right could stay with the everlasting verities which desert living reveals and the requirements that those in the desert conform thereto.

So, there is this solid ring of everlastingness about desert writing and editorial work.

Compliments, congratulations, and friendship to you.

VIERLING KERSEY, President
Dept. of Parks and Recreation
City of Los Angeles

University Scientist New President of Desert Council

Lloyd Tevis, Jr., director of the University of California's Desert Mobile Laboratory, was elected president of the Desert Protective Council for the calendar year, 1960, at the annual organization meeting of the board of directors held in Palm Springs November 1. Tevis is a zoologist who for the past year has been chairman of the Council's wildlife committee. Harry C. James was re-elected executive director of the organization.

Arctic Expedition

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WESTERN RIVER TOURS

RICHFIELD, UTAH

GET INTO THE WIDE OPEN

with . . .



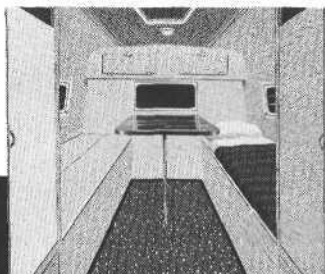
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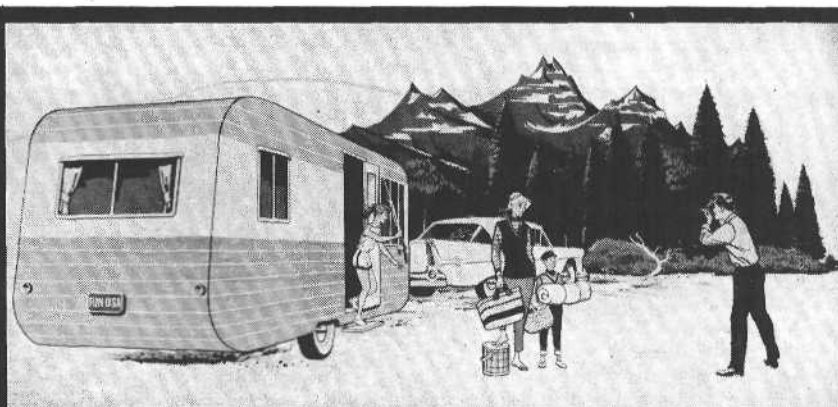
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TREASURE TRAILS by Santschi, 117 pages, Doodlebug Edition, illustrated, dowsing for treasure, many devices described. A scarce item now available \$1.50. Foul Anchor, DM, Rye, New York.

BOOKS: "PANNING Gold for Beginners," 50c. "Gold in Placer," \$3. Frank J. Harnagy, 701 1/2 E. Edgeware, Los Angeles 26, California.

GEM HUNTERS Atlas: Now! Both of these popular books are in their 3rd printing with all collecting areas spotted in color. 32 full page maps in each book with complete coverage of the six states. Many new locations. California-Nevada, \$1. Southwest—Arizona, New Mexico, Utah, Colorado, \$1, postpaid. Scenic Guides, Box 288, Susanville, Calif.

FIRST THREE Volumes of Desert . . . are now available. Volume 1, November '37 to October '38 in binder \$20. Volume 2, November '38 to October '39 in binder \$17. Volume 3, November '39 to October '40 in binder \$10. Limited supply. Send order to: Desert Magazine, Box VB, Palm Desert, California.

THE STORY of Keeler. The Carson and Colorado narrow gauge railroad, "The Slim Princess" now facing abandonment. Fabulous Cerro Gordo mine, Los Angeles Comstock, a wealth of information for Rail-fans, Rockhounds, and collectors of early history, ghost and old mining towns. Forty reproductions of old pictures. Price \$1. Address P.O. Box 643, Lone Pine, California.

BE A Travel writer. Sell articles and photos to travel magazines for good money. "Travel Writer's Passport" gives you over 170 travel article markets—editor's names, photo needs—150 information sources—lists over 100 travel books, loads of editorial suggestions, writing hints. Send \$1 today for unique "Travel Writer's Passport." Martin H. Gross, 1118 Boynton Avenue, New York 72, N. Y.

222 BACK copies Desert Magazine. Excellent condition. \$35 lot only FOB. Write Mary S. Marshall, Palomar Mountain, California.

● CLUBS - ORGANIZATIONS

TREASURE HUNTERS: Join club, treasurescopes, treasures located, books, magazines, maps, information. Treasure Trove, 2922 164th, Flushing 58, New York.

● COLOR SLIDES

WILDLIFE OF Alaska, 16 or 8 mm. movies: walrus, sheep, caribou, moose, goat, bear, glaciers, Lake George Breakup, wildflowers, small animals, birds, sport fishing & Eskimo dances. Elmer & Lupe King, Alaska Film, Box 5621, Mt. View, Alaska.

COLOR SLIDES. Re-live your vacation trips. 3000 travel Kodachromes, parks, U.S., foreign, nature, etc. Free list (sample 30c). Send today. Kelly D. Choda, Box 15, Palmer Lake, Colo.

SCENIC SOUTHWEST: Slim Princess narrow gauge railroad, 12—\$3; Bodie 12—\$3; Tropic Mine near Mojave 12—\$3; Red Rock Canyon 4—\$1; Rhyolite, Nevada 24—\$6; Central City, Colorado 4—\$1; Salton Sea area 8—\$2; Death Valley 8—\$2. Longstreet, 5453 Virginia, Hollywood 29, California.

● EQUIPMENT-SUPPLIES

CAMPING EQUIPMENT, tents; world's largest selection. Send 25c for new 160 page catalog. Morsan Tents, 10-21U 50th Ave., Long Island City 1, New York.

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FREE CATALOG—World's finest lightweight camping and mountaineering equipment. Used on Mt. Everest, Himalayas, Andes, etc. It's expensive but absolutely unsurpassed! Gerry, Dept. 107, Ward, Colorado.

ROCK HOBBY "Hobby Gems" is the original rock polishing kit for beginners; 7 gem stones, ring and earrings and necessary materials to shape and polish the gem stones. Only \$3.00 postpaid. Omaha Lapidary, 5620 Ohio Street, Omaha 4, Nebraska.

NEW TYPE tumbler rough grinds, polishes one operation. No changing belts or pulleys. We specialize in Lake Superior agates, rough or polished. Dealers wanted. Scoop Advertising Service, Stockton, Illinois.

MINERALS, SPECIMENS, slabs, rough material, mountings, lapidary supplies, etc. Shamrock Rock Shop, 1115 La Cadena Drive, Riverside, California. Phone OVerland 6-3056.

TRADE FIVE core drill units, new, partially assembled. For late model station wagon. Phone EMpire 1-2300 Granada Hills, California, evenings after 8 p.m.

● GEMS, CUT - POLISHED

BEGINNER'S SPECIAL Bargain: "Treasure Chest" variety slabs, rough and bright tumbled baroques. Box 3 3/4"x3 3/4"x7 1/2" chock-full. First ten orders received this month get nice surprise gift. Postpaid only \$3. Paul's Desert Gems, Box 271, Rosamond, California.

BETTER BAROQUES, expertly tumbled—Montana agate, jaspers, woods, etc., mixed, \$3 lb., 25 for \$1 plus postage, George Greer, Lewiston, Montana.

FOR YOUR collection—Florida's beautiful coral agate. Send one dollar (no tax) for polished specimen to The Agatery, 851 Bay Point Drive, Madeira Beach 8, Florida. Money back if not satisfied.

SPECIAL SLAB Offer: Over 20 varieties of foreign and domestic materials only \$5, taxes and postpaid. We guarantee you'll be pleased. Ramona Gemcrafts, Box 142, Ramona 6, Calif.

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CLEAR QUARTZ stars, pagodas, butterflies, cranes, tear drops, crosses, Eiffel Towers; Smoky quartz hearts. Findings, chains, caps. Dealers write: Bedside Lapidary, O'Neill, Neb.

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BUY NOW—Be ready: Tumble polished baroques mixed medium sizes, \$4 per pound, 3 pounds \$10. Unsorted tumbler run baroques, \$2.50 per pound. Guadalupe Canyon yellow moss agate baroques, \$4 per pound. Postage, please. Tako Rock Gems, Box 332, Sierra Vista, Arizona.

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● GEMS, DEALERS

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"SELL ROCKS?" Yes! Sands, clays, soils, rocks, ores, fossils, many outdoor items sell for cash, trade for things wanted. Let Mother Nature finance outings, hobby, business. Details 4c stamp. "Suppliers' Bulletin" 25c. D. McCampbell, Box 503, Calexico, California.

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12 POUNDS of beautiful Colorado mineral specimens, \$8 prepaid. Ask for list of others. Jack the Rockhound, P.O. Box 245, Carbondale, Colorado.

FOSSILS. 12 different for \$2. Other prices on request. Will buy, sell or trade. Museum of Fossils. Clifford H. Earl, P. O. Box 188, Sedona, Arizona.

WOOD, VERY colorful and good gem quality. State color and size wanted, 75c per pound, postage paid. Simonds Mines, Box 511, Hanksville, Utah.

HUBNERITE TUNGSTEN, rhodonite; good dark pink, Zonyite in Guitermanite matrix at \$1 pound, sphalerite crystals, quartz and calcite crystals. For details write: The Prospect Hole, Silverton, Colorado.

COMPARISON MINERAL specimens sample order of ten \$1.50. Included are lepidolite, smaltite, bauxite, cinnabar, garnierite, arsenophrite, chromite. Or send for free details on how to obtain 210 one inch specimens for only \$18.50 postpaid! Minerals Unlimited, 1724 University Avenue, Berkeley 3, Calif.

GOLD ORE! Large beautiful specimen from World's Greatest Gold Camp. \$1. Start now—your collection from famous Colorado mines. "The Old Prospector," Box 396M, Cripple Creek, Colorado.

ROCKS AND Minerals Kit, containing 60 selected specimens including gold and silver bearing ores. Invaluable to beginners or to one who prospects for pleasure. Learn to locate mineral deposits, recognize precious metals, identify geologic formations. Each specimen 3/4" plus, in partitioned box. An ideal Christmas gift. Only \$5.50 postpaid in U.S. Corral Gem Shop, 724 Willamette, Eugene, Oregon.

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NEW ACQUISITION, just arrived: Bright yellow autunite, deep and light green prymorphite, shiny radiating tourmaline, radiating green aegirite, terminated cerussite, rich gold and white quartz, deep purple amethyst, etc. Stock of domestic and foreign crystals, massive mineral specimens—Please write for free list. Continental Minerals, P.O. Box 1206, Anaconda, Montana.

MINERAL COLLECTORS—Once again we have limited number well defined barite roses 2" to 3" diameter \$2 to \$5. Hourglass selenite crystal singles, 75c to \$2. Have rare borate crystals—inquire. Paul's Desert Gems, Box 271, Rosamond, California.

DUMORTIERITE PINK massive 40c pound postpaid, Nellie Basso Minerals, Box 315, 12th Street, Lovelock, Nevada.

FOR SALE: Keokuk quartz geodes, two halves each from collection many years old. Contain many minerals—quartz, millerite, pyrite, geothite, calcite, barite, dolomite, galena, marcasite. Price One Dollar diameter inch, plus dollar each additional mineral. Auchard's, 217 No. 7th, Atchison, Kansas.

TRINITITE. RADIOACTIVE. Glass formed by first Atomic bomb. Generous specimen postpaid \$1. Sandoval Minerals, Box 40, Sandoval, New Mexico.

● GEMS, ROUGH MATERIAL

WE ARE mining every day. Mojave Desert agate, jasper and palm wood shipped mixed 100 pounds \$10.50 F.O.B. Barstow. Morton Minerals & Mining, 21423 Highway 66, R.F.D. 1, Barstow, California.

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TURQUOISE FOR sale. Turquoise in the rough priced at from \$5 to \$50 a pound. Royal Blue Mines Co., Tonopah, Nevada.

BARGAINS! SELLING out. Beautiful pastel colored dendritic jasper 35c pound. Arizona petrified wood, 25c to \$1 pound. Crazy lace agate, 50c pound. Variety rough material and mineral specimens. Quantity discounts. Write for prices. Haney's, 1616 Randolph Parkway, Los Altos, California.

MOZARKITE COMPOSED of jasper, rhodonite, chalcedony and agate. Beautiful colors in pink, grays, reds, blues and browns. Takes a beautiful polish. Send \$2.50 for get-acquainted offer. Timberline Lake Rock and Gem Shop, Lincoln, Missouri.

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COLORFUL AUSTRALIAN Fire Opal \$25.00 worth on approval. No deposit! Select the best. Return the rest. See before you buy. Free list. Western Rock & Gem, 20385 Stanton, Castro Valley, California.

GOLDEN SWIRL Agate from Utah. White, yellow, brown. Nice irregular bands, eyes and circles. Finishes nicely. 75c a pound, 3 pounds for \$2; slabs, 15c inch. Plus postage. Stan's Shop, 123 West Fifth North, Provo, Utah.

MOJAVE DESERT jasper, howlite, agate, 75c pound, Australian rhodonite, aventurine, lepidolite, rainbow obsidian, \$1 pound, postage and tax extra. Tubby's Rock Shop, 3329 Mayfield, La Crescenta, California.

GEMS — MINERALS — Special offer: 1/4 pound phantom amethyst; from Africa; 75c postpaid. Free list. For the beautiful and exotic, write at once to The Vellor Company, P.O. Box 44(D), Overland, St. Louis 14, Missouri.

OPALS AND sapphires direct from Australia. This month's best buy: black opals from Lightning Ridge. 1 solid black opal cabochon, 1 piece rough black opal cutting material, 1 piece rough black opal matrix. All fine gem material for \$15, free airmail. Send personal check, international money order, bank draft. Free 16 page list of all Australian gemstones. Australian Gem Trading Co., 294 Little Collins St., Melbourne C.I., Australia.

ARIZONA SPECIMENS native copper bornite and cuprite \$4 value for \$2. Cactus Rock Shop, P.O. Box 6, Tombstone, Arizona.

● INDIAN GOODS

AUTHENTIC INDIAN jewelry, Navajo rugs, Chimayo blankets, squaw boots, old Indian collection. Closed Tuesdays. Pow-Wow Indian Trading Post, 19967 Ventura Blvd., East Woodland Hills, Calif. Open Sundays.

FINE RESERVATION-MADE Navajo and Zuni jewelry. Old pawn. Hundreds of fine old baskets, moderately priced, in excellent condition. Navajo rugs, Chimayo homespun, artifacts. A collector's paradise! Open daily 10 to 5:30, closed Mondays. Buffalo Trading Post, Highway 18, Apple Valley, California.

THREE FINE prehistoric Indian war arrowheads \$1. Flint scalping knife \$1. Rare flint thunderbird \$3. All \$4. Catalog free. Arrowhead, Glenwood, Arkansas.

PINE VALLEY Trading Post deals in authentic Indian goods, rugs and jewelry, also gift items, imports. On Highway 80, 43 miles east of San Diego. Mailing address, Box 208, Pine Valley, California.

APACHE TRADING Post, Angeles Forest Highway, R.R. 3, Box 94, Palmdale, California, featuring Indian artifacts, antiques, gems and minerals. Open Sundays.

INDIAN CRAFTS and artifacts, buffalo skulls, mounted Texas longhorns. Price list free. Thunderbird Trading Post, Highway 80, P.O. Millsap, Texas.

POTTERY PIPE, four perfect arrows, flint thunderbird. All for \$5. List free. Billy Branley, 2734 St. Louis, Fort Worth 10, Texas.

SELLING 20,000 Indian relics. 100 nice ancient arrowheads \$25. Grooved stone tomahawk \$3. Indian skull \$25. List free. Lear's, Glenwood, Arkansas.

● JEWELRY

JEWELRY PARTS—why pay retail? Catalog lists bracelets, sweater clips, tools, bails, cuff links, bell caps, Epoxy-Adhesive, earrings, belt buckles, chains, neck clasps, key chains, lariats, slides, tips or cords, as well as ring mountings, pendants, brooches, silver, and lapidary machines. Prompt first class mail delivery assured. All items sold on money-back guarantee. Send 4c stamp to cover postage on your catalog. Rock Craft, Box 424D-1, Temple City, California.

HANDCRAFTED GEMSTONE jewelry — Individual design—Bolo ties, Masonic emblem mounted on drilled gemstones. Western Gems, 2407 Ames, Edgewater, Colorado.

BOLA AND jewelry finding price list. Compare our prices before you buy. Please include 10c to cover cost of mailing. Dealers send resale number for wholesale list. The Hobby Shop, Dept. DM, P.O. Box 753, 619 North 10th Avenue (Hiway 30), Caldwell, Idaho.

JEWELRY FINDINGS: Get quality with price, send 4c stamp for our 5 page bulletin 10 on findings and bola cords. The Tucker's, Dept. D, 3242 New Jersey Ave., Lemon Grove, Cal.

LET US mount your gems. Send us your own personal design. We manufacture mountings and set your stone in 14K gold, silver, or platinum. Quality workmanship, reasonable. Searly Mfg. Jlr., 307 Schuter Bldg., El Dorado, Arkansas.

BLACK JADE and sterling silver necklace or earrings, screw or pierced. In attractive box, \$3.75. Both \$6.75. Oregon Gem Supply, Box 298, Jacksonville, Oregon.

MORE CLASSIFIEDS ON NEXT PAGE

TRADING POST --- (Continued)

UNIQUE LOVELY bracelets of ten different identified gems set flat on untarnishable gilt H.P. mounting. Choice of "Gems of the World" or "Western Gems," \$3 each. Also choker-style necklaces to match, \$3.75 each. Tax, postage included. Bensusan, 8615 Columbus Avenue, Sepulveda, California.

ROCKHOUNDS! LET me make mountings for your cabochons, sterling or gold, any design. Gemkutt, 3128 East Washington Street, Phoenix, Arizona.

ALUMINUM CHAINS! Dealers, write for wholesale price list on our fabulous line of non-tarnishing aluminum chains. Include \$1 for samples postpaid. Please use letterhead or state tax number. R. B. Berry & Company, 5040 Corby Street, Omaha 4, Nebraska.

CUSTOM FACETING of precious and semi-precious stones. R. Reis & Associates, 3829 West 66th Street, Chicago 29, Illinois.

DO IT yourself agatized coral dangle bracelet kit. Includes necessary materials for three complete bracelets. Gold or rhodium finish. State choice. Complete, \$5.00, Federal tax and postage included. Money back if not satisfied. The Agatery, 851 Bay Point Drive, Madeira Beach 8, Florida.

● MINING

ASSAYS. COMPLETE, accurate, guaranteed. Highest quality spectrographic. Only \$5 per sample. Reed Engineering, 620-R So. Inglewood Ave., Inglewood, California.

\$1 FOR gold areas, 25 California counties. Geology, elevations. Pans \$2.75, \$2.25. Poke \$1. Fred Mark, Box 801, Ojai, California.

● REAL ESTATE

80 ACRES near Lockhart, level, \$125 acre, 25% down. 20 acres Highway 395, level, north of Adelanto, \$150 acre, 10% down. 2 1/2 acres west of Adelanto, level, \$1495, 10% down. 2 1/2 acres Lancaster on paved highway, shallow water, level, \$2495, 10% down. Dr. Dodge, 1804 Lincoln Blvd., Venice, Calif.

OVERLOOKING OAK Creek Canyon, Arizona. Seven room commercial and residential building on highway, 3 miles S.W. of Sedona. 70 ft. frontage—143 feet deep—1500 sq. ft. floor space—water rights, bus & mail service—rock construction; in growing district, mild winters. Price \$21,000—\$6000 cash, terms at 6%. Blandin Hall of Art, Sedona, Arizona.

CHOICE 626 acres on Dillon Road, few miles from Desert Hot Springs, California; \$250 per acre. Write Ronald L. Johnson, Thermal, Cal.

A DISTINGUISHED and important private camp for boys and girls, for sale in the Rocky Mountains, 70 miles west of Great Divide, near Four Corners of Colorado, Utah, Arizona, New Mexico, 24 separate cabins and buildings, recreation hall, pool, 1/2 mile of water frontage, 420 acres rangeland, horses, burros, cattle available, expansion no end, gross receipts about \$55,000. Write for particulars. Wallace Hebbard, Box 180, Santa Barbara, California.

CABIN AND 2 1/2 acres near Twentynine Palms, electricity available, near Lear Road, Sec. 21, 2N, 8E, \$1000. Box 38, Hermosa Beach, Cal.

TOP-RATED cattle ranch for 5000 head, only 15% down to cowman, with long term contract at 5%. One-half minerals on 50,000 acres. Year-long country. \$2,000,000. Shown to qualified buyers only. Write or phone: Strout Realty, St. Johns, Arizona. Federal 7-4966, Federal 7-4334.

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● MAPS

SECTIONIZED COUNTY maps — San Bernardino \$1.50; Riverside \$1; Imperial, small \$1, large \$2; San Diego 50c; Inyo, western half \$1.25, eastern half, \$1.25; Kern \$1.25; other California counties \$1.25 each. Nevada counties \$1 each. Topographic maps of all mapped western areas. Westwide Maps Co., 114 W. Third St., Los Angeles, California.

"TREASURE MAP of the Great Mojave Desert," finest guide to Mojave's treasure of gems, minerals, rocks and recreation, 22x33", 26 detailed maps to special localities. \$1 postpaid. Gemac, Box 808J, Mentone, Calif.

● PLANTS, SEEDS

CHIA AS featured in article, "Hot Cakes and Chia" for sale—limited quantity, \$7.50 lb. Inquiries to Bruce Gregory, Box 65, Red Mountain, California.

RAISE GOURDS—colorful, very fascinating, take little space, make wonderful hobby or crafts can develop into commercially profitable business. Complete instruction kit, craft sheets, seeds, copy magazine, etc., all \$1 prepaid. Price lists of allied crafts included. Joycrafts, 337D Pittock Block, Portland 5, Oregon.

● FOR WOMEN

LADY GODIVA "The World's Finest Beautifier." For women who wish to become beautiful, for women who wish to remain beautiful. An outstanding desert cream. For information, write or call Lola Barnes, 963 N. Oakland, Pasadena 6, Calif., or phone SYcamore 4-2378.

HAVE THE aroma of the Southwest with Cactus Perfume \$1.50 plus tax. Desert Incense \$1.75; Desert Cactus Asst. \$1.75; prepaid. Complete assortment authentic reservation hand made Navajo, Zuni, Hopi Indian jewelry. Many styles genuine leather squaw boots, moccasins, all sizes. Send your gift requirements to our "Personal Shopper," we guarantee satisfaction. With all purchases \$5 up you get "Souvenir" key chain free. Hopi House, 20 South Scott, Tucson, Arizona.

● RECORDS

CANYON INDIAN phonograph records, authentic songs and dances, all speeds. Write for latest list: Canyon Records, 834 No. 7th Avenue, Phoenix 1, Arizona.

DESERT ALBUM, L. P., Something new! Something modern! And something different! "Golden Album of Desert Songs." Original desert songs set to beautiful modern desert music. The perfect gift for Christmas! Eight delightful songs composed, arranged and sung by big time professionals. B. M. I. Send to all your friends for Christmas; there is nothing like it on the market. Price only \$5 each, plus postage. California customers include 4% sales tax. Send check and address to: Lois E. Roy, Box 427, Palm Desert, California.

● WESTERN MERCHANDISE

FOR SALE desert-colored objects; ink wells, whiskey flasks, Ford headlight—all very old. Many others, desert antiques, rocks, old tobacco cutter, collector's items. 35035 77th St. Box 147, Littlerock, California, at Shirley Lumber Company, 2 blocks off Highway 138.

GHOST TOWN items: Sun-colored glass, amethyst to royal purple; ghost railroads materials, tickets; limited odd items from camps of the '60s. Write your interest—Box 64-D, Smith, Nevada.

● MISCELLANEOUS

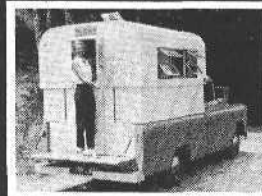
FIND FLUORESCENT minerals the easy way. New detector operates in daylight without batteries. Fits in pocket and eliminates dark box. Price \$12.50. Free brochure, Essington Products and Engineering, Box 4174, Coronado Station, Santa Fe, New Mexico.

MICROSCOPES, NEW and used, for professionals and hobbyists. Telescopes, scientific supplies. Write for price list. Peninsula Scientific, 2421 El Camino, Palo Alto, California.

NEW ORIGINAL Rockhound and Desert Christmas cards. Cartoons and beautiful desert scenes. Box of 24 cards \$3.95 postpaid, reduced prices for clubs and dealers. A new unique line of cards by Tallmen Studios, 44714 6th St. East, Lancaster, California.

ELEGANT GERMAN Shepherd puppies AKC, 4-5 months, enhance the beauty of your grounds as well as protect your property with a beautiful pup that matures into a majestic, intelligent adult dog. Males \$75. Females \$150. Delivered in L.A. area. Shipped collect elsewhere. Write Georgjune Rancho, 13236 Reservoir Ave., Mint Canyon, Calif., for description, colors, etc.

FOR SALE—really deluxe camper. 3/4 ton four wheel drive Dodge-winch, power steering and brakes. Butane stove, refrigerator, light. One year your wife will enjoy too. H. Miller, 210 North Central, Glendale 3, California.



The Alcan Camper is quickly transformed from its compact low silhouette on the road to roomy walk-in living quarters. Drive safely at any speed with minimum drag and sway. Moments later, enjoy the comfort and convenience of a weather tight, high ceiling, home away from home complete with three burner stove, sink, cabinets, ice box, beds, and many other luxury features.

The unique hydraulic mechanism which raises the camper top can be safely operated even by a small child. Locks prevent accidental lowering. The top is lowered quickly by the simple turn of a valve.

Write today for more information on the most advanced camper on the road.

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WHISKERS AND CHRISTMAS

BY HARRY OLIVER

LAST Christmas, us local folks got together to give the kids a real Santa Claus for their schoolhouse celebration. Year before last we picked Kelsey 'cause he has a rosy, plump face and is a right big hombre, but one of the hooks on his ears gave way and the phony beard fell off, so this year the folks wanted real whiskers or no Santa Claus.

Liminatin' Lem was elected to go up Rock Candy Gulch and fetch back old Holladay who'd been up there prospectin' and raisin' whiskers for the last 50 years. There was no question about him sportin' one of the finest flowin' white beards a-shootin' out sideways and reachin' down to his belt. Lem brings him in, parks him with the Courtneys and reports back to us that the old fellow's glad he's due for a couple of days of good food.

Next day everybody was helpin' pack the benches into the school house when a stranger come along. Leastwise he seemed like a stranger. Then someone shouted, "Leapin' Lizards! It's Holladay!"

Honest, I couldn't believe my eyes. Holladay's whiskers was gone; he looked like a shorn sheep. Every-

thing stopped. Our ideal Santa Claus had gone up the flue.

Old man Holladay's all broke up and tells us he couldn't help it and why. He goes into detail about how he'd packed them whiskers for years, slept close to campfires and never singed 'em, worked one winter on a buzz saw and never lost a hair, even gave up chewin' tobacco once they went white, and always hoped he'd be buried with 'em on.

They was his pride and joy and never gave him any trouble—till last night. Here's what happened: He was combin' 'er feelin' pretty proud that he'd been picked for Santa Claus when that oldest Courtney boy commenced to question him, finally askin' him where he put them whiskers when he slept—under or over the blankets? He says he couldn't answer the boy 'cause he'd never given it a thought, but that night there didn't seem to be any place for 'em.

He tried puttin' 'em everywhere; over the covers, but that didn't seem right—under the covers, and that didn't seem right. He even got up and wrapped his bandana around 'em, but there just weren't no place to put them whiskers. They seemed to pull and torture him.

He rolled and tossed, sat up and wondered why he'd ever raised 'em, and couldn't for the life of him figure where he'd been puttin' 'em all these years. Knowin' there'd never be any sleepin' with 'em again, and a-tryin' to keep 'em for the kids' Christmas, he put rocks in his boots, squeezed his feet in, and laced 'em up tight, tryin' to get his mind on his feet. He hoped that one tooth of his would start achin', or even his rheumatism come back again, but nothing could take his mind off his problem of where to park those whiskers.

"I had to find the sheep shears or go mad," he says to me, as big tears rolled down his cheeks.

Well, we sent Accumulatin' Luke clear to Clark Lake for Captain Ashby, the second best whiskers 'round these parts. Santa Claus No. 2 did pretty well and no one would have known about his peg leg if it hadn't been for that knot hole near teacher's desk.

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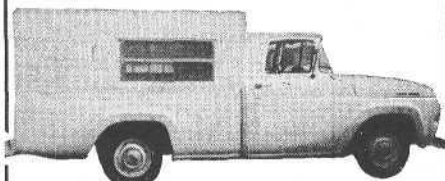
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LITERATURE UPON REQUEST

BOOKS of the SOUTHWEST

SIGNIFICANT STUDY OF BAJA CALIFORNIA

Those who enjoy Lower California beyond El Rosario will find *The Central Desert of Baja California: Demography and Ecology* a very worthwhile book. Homer Aschmann is the author of the 315 page scientific study of the center of the peninsula.

Most of the book, a paper-bound volume printed by the University of California Press, is given to a historical dissection of the Indian populations that inhabited the central portion of Baja California. Early contacts with Europeans are reviewed and the Mission influence is also brought into focus.

There is much solid material in Aschmann's book, and anyone traveling southward to the central deserts of Baja California will want to take the book with them. A history of the aboriginal inhabitants and reports on the Mission Indians, their population, distribution and decline, makes up a large portion of the work. Several maps support the report; also, 16 photographs.

This book can be ordered through the Desert Magazine Book Store, Palm Desert, Calif. The price is \$5 plus 15 cents for packaging and mailing. California residents add 20 cents for state tax.

ROOD, RHYOLITE AND A LOST SPANISH GALLEON

Harold and Lucile Weight (Calico Press, Twentynine Palms, Calif.) have placed on the desert book market three small paperback offerings that have some merit:

Wm. B. Rood is in the main a reprint of historic articles of and by "one of the most adventurous of the Death Valley Fortyniners." Included are letters from the Huntington Library collection. Rood was an Arizona pioneer, Apache fighter and "river ranchero." The folio includes a worthy fold-out reprint of Rafael Pumpelly's 1869 map of the Southwest. Illustrations; two dozen pages; \$1.50.

Rhyolite is a 32-page compilation of yarns concerning "Death Valley's ghost city of golden dreams." Map; illustrations; 60c.

Lost Ship of the Desert is a tracing of the legend concerning the gold-laden Spanish galleon (or Viking Ship) that sailed up the Colorado and into the Salton basin. There are short tales in this book by several writers (Weight, Guthrie, Belden and others) who present views on the subject. Map; illustrations; 50c.

MODEST GUIDE TO VIRGINIA CITY, NEV.

A new publishing firm, Pages of History (Sausalito, Calif.), makes its first offering a modest one: *Guide to Virginia City, Nevada, and the Comstock Lode Area*. The 56-page paperback is sub-headed: *Self-Guided Tour for the Serious Tourist*.

Best thing about the guide is a generous offering of old-time line drawings. A folding map—not attached to the booklet—is included in the \$1.50 purchase price. On the map are marked 48 "points of interest" which are keyed to chapters in the book. This is a fair purchase for those who plan to visit Virginia City in person.

Books reviewed on this page can be purchased by mail from Desert Magazine Book Store, Palm Desert, California. Please add 10c for postage and handling per book. California residents also add 4% sales tax. Write for free book catalog.

AN ON-THE-SPOT REPORT OF EARLY CALIFORNIA

E. Gould Buffum was in California during the momentous days when gold poured out of the Sierras, and American rule replaced Mexican. History was being made all around him, and luckily (for us) Buffum was a writer of considerable talent. The readable book he wrote about gold-crazy California was called, *Six Months in the Gold Mines*. The Ward Ritchie Press recently brought out a modern printing of this work, selling for \$5 per copy. The 145-page book is attractively bound with a hard cover.

Baja California aficionados will enjoy a chapter on that sunny peninsula (Buffum was stationed there with the Army of Occupation.)

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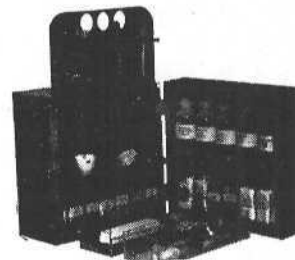
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DESERT PRIMER: Adventures Afoot

Is modern mechanized man forsaking one of the most stimulating forms of recreation known? It is not likely that backpack hiking as a pastime will die out, but it remains one of the least appreciated means of enjoying the Southwest outdoors today. Indeed, with thousands of square miles of incomparable terrain in the Southwest to explore afoot, backpacking has worlds of enjoyment to offer young and old alike.

In the first place, hiking is only "hard work" when you make it so. And the easiest way to turn what should be a pleasure into drudgery is to fill your knapsack with items that are luxuries. Often many things you consider "necessities" are not worth packing on your back.

Travel light. You don't need a full complement of pots and pans, you don't need a portable stove, nor do you require a razor. The list of "don't needs" is endless, but you will need: sleeping bag or blankets; first aid kit (you can carry your matches therein); flashlight (a pencil flashlight will serve your needs just as well as a five-cell job); toilet kit; canteen (unless you are following a live stream — and Southwestern live streams are rare); cooking kit; and a lightweight pack frame and knapsack. You even can eliminate the frame and knapsack by rolling up supplies and equipment in your sleeping bag (if the bag is equipped with a carrying harness that slips over the shoulders).

In place of towels and dish cloths, try paper towels (excellent for starting the fire the next morning, and they do a

good job of cleaning pots and pans). A pocket knife and compass don't weigh much, and are considered "standard equipment."

If you are certain that you will come to fresh water, carry dehydrated foods instead of weighty canned goods.

Plan your trip, be familiar—at least on a map—with the country you are exploring, and never go into the wilderness without someone knowing where you plan to go and when you expect to return.

Let your physical condition determine what kind of hike you want to make. If you are not "in condition," don't tackle the rugged canyons of Baja California on a first outing. A backpack trip should never be a race against the clock. Take time to see the world around you (that's why you are making the hike), and rest at frequent intervals.

Footwear is important. Get your blisters at home by breaking-in that new pair of hiking boots weeks and even months before the backpack trip.

¶ For the first time in many years, wild black bears have been seen on the South Rim of Grand Canyon. Reports indicate that the bears are two or three years old and weigh from 150 to 200 pounds. Potentially dangerous to overly-curious tourists, the bears so far have done no worse than knock over a

few garbage cans. Most of the bruises were spotted in Grandview, a heavily wooded area 10 miles east of Park headquarters.

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HILTON | Whispering Canyon

Continued from page 12

with chalcedony and quartz geodes, when my companions came across another rattlesnake. It was about the same size and of the same coloration as the first snake, and it too had a "soft" rattle sound.

The canyon seemed to end right ahead of us, but at this stone wall a sharp bend led to a very deep and narrow gorge. Here we had the strange feeling that we were being watched by someone or something in the cliffs above. Small rocks kept dropping about us as we hurried through the

narrows as silently as possible. None of us felt right about the place. For several hundred feet, the cliff on the south hung out over the canyon floor. One could look straight up now and not see the friendly sky. It was the coolest place we had found, but we did not care to linger. The falling pebbles and the awesome overhangs did nothing for our confidence. At one sharp bend a cave resembling an old mine tunnel took off downward at a steep angle. Flood waters had packed the cracks between the broken

rocks on its floor with matted twigs and palm leaves. None of us felt like following it.

"This whole canyon whispers," Lillian observed. "Have you noticed it? The slightest motion of the air makes the palm trees whisper like running water. The sand under our feet whispers when we walk over it. Even the rattlesnakes whisper."

And we human intruders — with no reason to do so — conversed in whispers.

Lunch-time came and we gathered together in a spot of shade. I had been hoarding four beautiful mangos, and there were some luscious tomatoes that had been flown in from the States. The rest of the food tasted fine, but these fresh items were especially welcome.

Re-entering the sunlight was almost like receiving a physical blow. The temperature in the shade must have been 120 degrees, and shade was scarce above the narrows.

It did not appear to be much farther to the head of the canyon. Towering walls were closing in on us, and the palms grew closer together. The canyon was heavier with brush and rocks, and it split just ahead.

When we reached the fork, we took the right branch, for the left was steeper and choked with vegetation. The breeze that had started out with us was gone. The palms no longer whispered of water. The silence was broken only now and then by a cicada, or the chirp of some bird hidden in the brush.

Finally, our canyon turned into a narrow gorge, and an 80-foot dry waterfall blocked the way.

We could see more palm trees on the next bench, and Nacho decided to climb the cliff. Gordon and I contented ourselves by half-heartedly dig-

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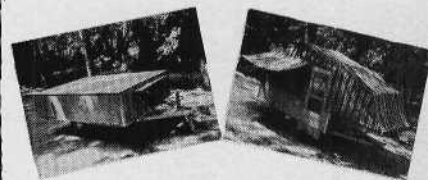
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ging in the sand with the folding trench shovel. Two feet down, the sand was dripping wet and we became excited even in this heat. A few more inches and we met with a mixture of sand and rock that did not respond to our small shovel and reduced energy. There was water here, no doubt of it!

All of a sudden a crashing sound came from above. Half a dozen huge rocks hurtled into the gorge and landed all around us. Then came Nacho's voice, "*Cuidado, senores*, the rocks are very loose here. I have climbed two dry falls and there is no water running, but it looks very damp."

On our way down-canyon we discovered several palm stumps that undoubtedly had been cut by man a very long time ago. Certainly no saw or steel ax had been used. One old trunk showed scars made by what must have been a stone ax.

It is inconceivable that a piece of land 45 miles long and 12 miles wide should have remained uninhabited throughout prehistoric and historic times. The stumps and scarred trunk are small proof that man was here, but still they are proof enough.

In 1765 the Jesuit Padre Link wrote of seeing fires on the island from the mainland. He went over by canoe with some Indians and found "no

people, animals or water." Could it be the inhabitants moved to the east side of the island to escape conversion?

After returning to the shore, we lost no time getting into the water. It was a wonderful feeling. For the first time in hours we were away from the scorching heat which seemed to come up from the ground as much as it did from the sky. The feel of the jade-smooth pebbles underfoot was a luxury after the walk over hot rugged canyon country. About one in 10 of the pebbles under the clear water would serve as semi-precious stones with just a little final polish. Jaspers, chalcedonies and zeolitic flower stones were mixed with varicolored plutonic rocks and obsidian pebbles. Lillian was in shallow water with her basket, gathering these natural tumbled stones to take home.

"We should call this Tumbled Stone Beach," I suggested. Lillian nodded in agreement.

Since she was without doubt the only white woman ever to enter the canyon of blue palms, I thought she should name it. "What shall we call the canyon, Lillian?" I asked.

The answer came without hesitation: "Whispering Canyon, of course! The Whispering Canyon of Guardian Angel Island."—END

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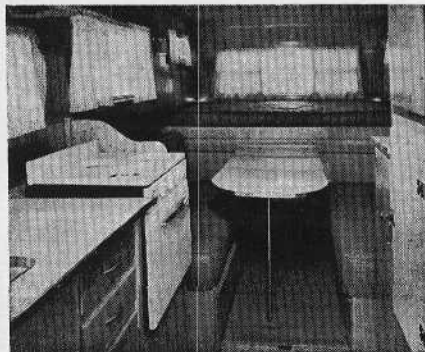
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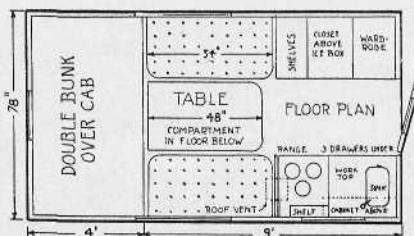
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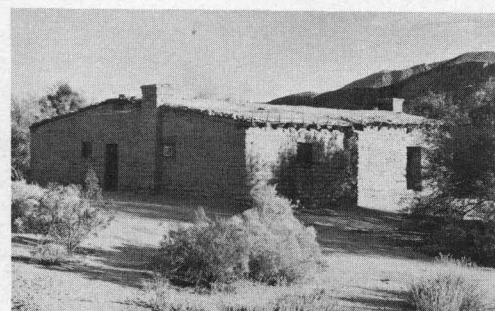
Desert's December Travel

By LUCILE WEIGHT
P.O. Drawer 758, Twentynine Palms, Calif.

By THOMAS B. LESURE
6120 N. 18th St., Phoenix

THERE'S A STRETCH of history-haunted road that no Colorado Desert visitor should miss. Originally an Indian trail, this route was deepened by the hooves of Spanish horses, broadened by the Army of the West, Mormon Battalion and gold-seeking pioneers. Then—a century ago—came the wheels of the Overland Mail stages.

Thousands of motorists cut this old trail at Scissors Crossing, as they travel Highway 78 to Borrego Valley, the Salton Sea and other favorite spots. Turn south at the Scissors junction and you



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can drive 30 miles of the old trail. About 46 miles south of Scissors, your road hits Highway 80.

Scissors Crossing is in San Felipe Valley, site of a Butterfield Stage Station and rancherias where Indians cultivated corn and melons, and gathered mesquite beans

and acorns. Six miles south a left-branch leads to Ghost Mountain, home of the late Marshal South and his family whose experiment in primitive desert living was chronicled in earlier *Desert Magazines*.

Mexican War days and emigrant trains are recalled by two Box Canyon Historical Area markers, 2½ miles farther. Cooke's men, following Kearny's troops in 1846, hacked at sheer canyon walls here with axes and hammers, to bring their wagons through.

Next is Mason Valley, and your historic trail reaches Vallecito, where early travelers from Arizona and points East found the first dependable water and feed after the ordeal of 100 miles of desert. Lt. Col. Pedro Fages stopped here in April, 1782, returning from his campaign against the Yuma Indians; American trappers and traders of 1820-30 came through. The Mexican War brought not only Kearny and Cooke, but Maj. Graham and Lt. Couets from Mexico in December 1848, Mexican boundary parties, then gold-seekers.

To protect the latter at the river crossing (there was no Yuma then) the U.S. established a camp on the Colorado, and in the spring of 1852, a sub-depot at Vallecito. The Indians here gathered wood for the soldiers, ground mesquite beans, made acorn bread, baked mescal hearts, and cultivated gardens.

The era for which this route is best known began in 1857 when James E. Birch held the San Antonio to San Diego mail contract. First trip on Butterfield's Overland Mail contract was completed in October, 1858. Civil War ended the St. Louis to San Francisco mail deliveries. In 1862 the California Column marched through here 2000 strong to recapture Arizona from Southern sympathizers.

Vallecito Butterfield Stage Station was restored in 1934. It and Agua Caliente, 3½ miles south, are San Diego County parks, with visitor facilities.

A mecca for health seekers, the "healing waters" of Agua Caliente were brought to wide attention by Marshal South (*Desert*, July '47). The springs supply small pools and bath-houses, and many visitors stay here in trailers.

Five miles south of Agua Caliente, today's graded road leaves the historic trail (impassable to ordinary cars) and continues on to Highway 80 at Ocotillo.

For those who want to delve into this route's past there are many volumes of history, stories of ghosts, of murders and personal dramas, of buried treasure and lost mines.—END

TUCSON IN DECEMBER is delightful. For "Old Pueblo" takes on an added charm—spiced with a colorful Mexican flavor—during the Christmas month. And if you haven't been to Tucson during the last year, you'll discover some mighty pleasant surprises.

A special Yuletide atmosphere comes in the traditional Mexican rite known as *Las Posadas*, the re-enactment of Mary's and Joseph's search for lodging in old Bethlehem (see page 6). Strange, moving and full of the Christmas mood, it's as enjoyable and inspiring for on-lookers as for participants.

Perhaps the biggest treat around Tucson—I must admit this is a strictly personal valuation confirmed by the acclamation of our five children—is Tucson Mountain Park, site of the Arizona-Sonorá Desert Museum and Old Tucson.

The museum, which emphasizes the living aspects of the desert, would be a stand-out attraction anywhere in the country. It's unique. In addition to displaying the fauna, flora, minerals and other fascinating facets of the southern Arizona and northern Mexican desert regions, two highlights have been added in the last couple of years. One—the Tunnel Exhibit—lets you go underground to see animals, reptiles and plants living as they normally do some 14 feet beneath the earth's surface. The other—the Water Exposition—carries out the push-button, inform-yourself idea on an unparalleled scale to furnish information on erosion, conservation and other salient factors in arid lands where water is so precious.



"OLD TUCSON" WAS CREATED AS A MOVIE SET.

Old Tucson—for real desert rats—may seem artificial since it was built as a movie set and has been enlarged during the last year or two. But it's likely to surprise, too, since the authenticity is genuine and the re-creation—from a boothill cemetery to the local bar and hotel—is amazing. However, if you wish to get off-beat, there are plenty of park trails leading to old mines, Indian pictographs and other typical Southwestern sights.

San Xavier Mission, recently restored, always deserves a visit, and even a few minutes (hardly sufficient) brings an uplifting quality that's difficult to beat. To glimpse the more remote past, try the Arizona State Museum, with its wealth of archeological displays, on the University of Arizona campus. Relaxation? Head for rock-rimmed Sabino Canyon and take along a picnic lunch to spice the sightseeing, trout fishing or horseback riding. For another idea of what's below the earth's surface, visit Colossal Cave west of Tucson and, in the process, take in the botanical wonderland of Saguaro National Monument where a fairly new administration building now is open.

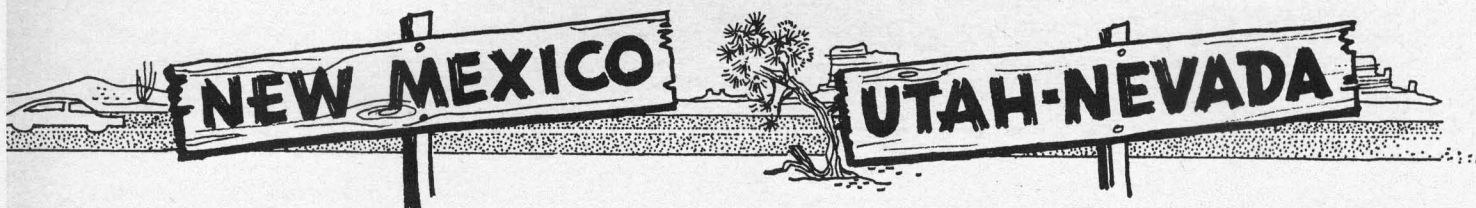
There are other possibilities such as skiing atop Mt. Lemmon, or even a visit to the ruins of old Fort Lowell. Once an important frontier army post, the fort now is less than a skeleton of its former self. But so was New Mexico's Fort Union—the latest National Monument in the United States. Fort Lowell may be forlorn, but surely it isn't completely dead. And therein lies a wonderful opportunity for preservation and restoration—if only someone will get a move on!

In the meantime, Tucson—with its fine resorts, dude ranches, motels, hotels and that special quality Old Pueblo exudes—remains a cheery place for Christmas-away-from-home.—END

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INDIAN, SPANISH, AND "Anglo" traditions blend in the Sunshine State to give Christmas celebrations a unique flavor.

Perhaps the most colorful setting for New Mexico's Yuletide events is Taos Pueblo, two miles north of the Spanish-and-"Anglo" city of Taos. Here in this thousand-year-old village, after dark on Christmas Eve, Indians hold a procession around their sacred plaza and into the church. After vespers which honor the Nativity, there is a Victory Dance, plumed and costumed, outside. A massive bonfire provides light—and heat—in the chill winter night. Visitors are welcome, and heavy coats and blankets are emphatically recommended.

You can leave the Taos Yule observance about 8 o'clock and make it to San Felipe in time for the celebration there. Midnight mass—called *misa del gallo*, Spanish for "mass of the rooster"—begins about 11 p.m. Three sets of ceremonial dances in the nave of the church follow. They invariably include some pueblo animal-hunting rite, such as the Buffalo-and-Deer Dance. All dances are repeated in the plaza after sunup on Christmas morning.

The church at San Felipe dates from 1706 and is one of the loveliest of New Mexico's early missions. Dancing lasts about an hour, and meanwhile the *padre* celebrates another *misa del gallo* at Santo Domingo, an Indian village six miles north. Dances are also held in the old church there, but the Indians have a Christmas feast in their homes first, so the dancers don't appear until 4 a.m.

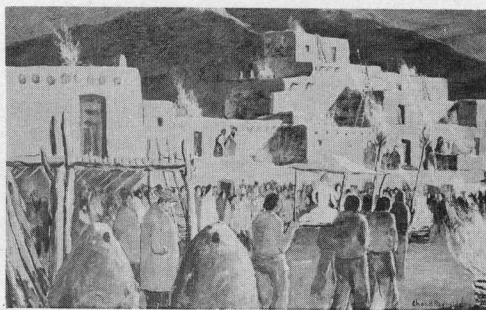
Midnight dances also take place on Christmas Eve at Tesuque, 10 miles north of Santa Fe. Day-time ceremonials honor the Holy Infant for three days, December 25-26-27, at several other New Mexico pueblos. Tesuque holds dances in the homes, after dark, on December 25-26-27-28 each year.

Several towns in New Mexico where Spanish is still the dominant tongue give Christmas pageants—holdovers, actually, from the "morality plays" of medieval Spain. *Las Posadas* ("The Inns") takes place at Mesilla in southern New Mexico.

Los Pastores ("The Shepherds") is given at Christmas near Alcalde, a few miles north of Espanola. Similar Nativity plays take place throughout the Rio Grande Valley, notably in the Belen-Socorro region, each year. There are no set dates, and may occur any time between Christmas Eve and January 6th.

Albuquerque puts on the biggest "Anglo" Christmas treat, with a gigantic display of *farolitos* or *luminarias* covering about 50 city squares. Scores of *luminarias* are used to decorate a single home, with scores more in the yard out front. They are usually spaced to follow the contour of a building and its setbacks, or along a walk or driveway. A community spirit prevails, and prizes are awarded for design. Albuquerqueans begin to collect grocery bags for the purpose long before Thanksgiving.

The portion of the Duke City thus decorated is just across U.S. 66 from "Old Town Plaza," the city laid out by Spaniards more than two-and-a-half centuries ago. Today, three sides of this plaza house curio shops, art galleries, and restaurants where Mexican food is served. Along the fourth side is an old mission, San Felipe de Neri, built in 1706, the year the city was founded.—END



CHAS. REYNOLDS' PAINTING OF TAOS CHRISTMAS.

MONTGOMERY PASS—leading from Bishop, Calif., to a piece of Nevada filled with mining memories—is the starting point for this month's trip. U.S. 6 is an all-year highway, and unless an early storm has left snow along its edges, there are pleasant places for a late-season picnic among the scattered pines on the pass.

Happily, the highway follows the narrow-gauge remnant of what was once Nevada's longest railroad—the Carson & Colorado—the line of the "Slim Princess." This section of the route was abandoned 22 years ago, and with it went memories of gay towns it had known in the prosperous 1880s.

Twelve miles east of the summit, Nevada's Route 10 takes off at Basalt for the ghost of Belleville. Here you can explore the remnants of a once-roaring camp whose massive stone mill walls, crumbled foundations and fields of glass fragments and tin rusted to lace are all that is left.



BOUNDARY PEAK, SEEN FROM MONTGOMERY PASS.

You'll find it hard to visualize, but Belleville had two hotels, two restaurants, a livery stable, two blacksmith shops, a school, assay office, express office, telegraph station, and seven saloons. When the railroad was built to within hearing distance of the camp (the happy day fell on New Year's Eve, 1881), the "boys" celebrated with a party over which some oldtimers still shake their heads.

It was here that the editor of the weekly *Tarantula*, Ramon Montenegro, exchanged bullets with Judge A. G. Turner. Montenegro came out second best. Here, too, Belleville toughs maintained steady, lethal warfare with the equally rowdy Brophy gang from nearby Marietta. The resultant killings, being in the nature of a reciprocal exchange, were never fully investigated by the law.

When the Slim Princess' last mournful whistle echoed against the ruined mill walls in 1937, there was no one left in Belleville to mourn with it. There is so little left of the gay town today that its stories of bullion riches and violence seem hard to believe. Even the graveyard, a short walk south alongside a little-traveled road, has only a few splintered markers left. Of these, only one is legible in part—"James Turner, Confed. . ."

There are marked side-roads off Route 10 that lead to the ghost towns of Marietta and Candelaria, but only experienced desert drivers should attempt them. No one should travel these roads when they are wet. These are worth remembering for special exploration. There is much to see and to know about them.

A person could spend a lifetime in this old mining region and never get enough of its blue skies, sage-heavy air and grand vistas. It only takes one visit for some folks to become incurable "ghost-towners."

Route 10 and the old narrow gauge's memory travel together the few remaining miles to U.S. 95, west-central Nevada's main north-south route. You can turn north here and follow the Slim Princess' trail to Hawthorne, where Walker Lake's fishing is year-around. Remember—when you get to Hawthorne—it was the railroad that created this pleasant little town, for Hawthorne was a C&C division point. It is good to know that at least one of the Slim Princess' contemporaries has survived in happy prosperity.—END

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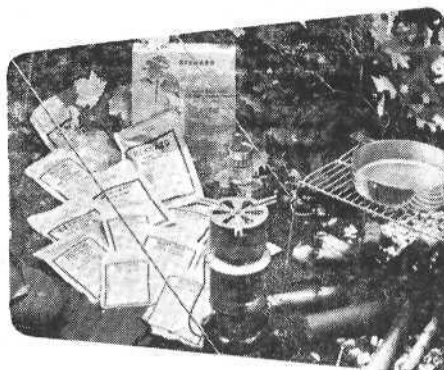
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By RANDALL HENDERSON

RECENTLY I SPENT an evening at a remote desert camp where one of America's foremost scientists was carrying on his research into the mysteries of that all-important function of plant life known as photosynthesis. It is an imposing word—photosynthesis—but you should add it to your vocabulary if you have not already done so because your health and mine depends primarily on the process identified by this term.

Simply stated, photosynthesis is a chemical process in the foliage of plants wherein the energy from the sun converts carbon dioxide from the air into sugar and other elements which provide food for animal life on this earth. Every leaf is a tiny factory which performs a function necessary to your life and mine.

My host was Fritz Went, formerly of Cal Tech and now Director of the Missouri Botanical Gardens near St. Louis. So new is the field of research in which he is engaged that Dr. Went himself had to perfect the instruments with which to carry on his studies. It is the basic research carried on by such scientists that has made possible most of the comforts and luxuries enjoyed by human beings in the civilized world today.

I can develop much more enthusiasm for the kind of work being done by Dr. Went than for the research of the space scientists. If, at the present stage of evolution, those space men ever find a way to manipulate the weather, that will be a more tragic event than the harnessing of nuclear energy. We humans are just not yet civilized enough to be tampering with such colossal power as is involved in the management of nuclear energy and weather control.

* * *

One of the interesting facts revealed by scientific studies during the International Geophysical Year was that if it were not for the extremely low temperatures, the great region of the Antarctic would be as arid as the Great American Desert. The average snowfall there is equivalent to five inches of annual rainfall. But the moisture which falls on the Antarctic, instead of disappearing in sand or evaporating, is frozen into the great ice cap, the average thickness of which is 8000 feet.

The Antarctic is one desert which will never be reclaimed for agriculture or real estate subdivisions. At least, we will hope not, for it is estimated that if a warm cycle or a shift in the earth's axis should cause the ice cap to melt it would raise the water level of all the oceans on this planet 300 feet.

* * *

Answering inquiries as to the status of two bills in which many readers of *Desert Magazine* are interested: The Wilderness bill was still in committee at the close of

the first session of the 86th Congress and will be on the agenda for the second session which opens in January. The Youth Conservation Corps bill sponsored by Senator Hubert Humphrey passed the Senate and is expected to reach the floor of the House in the second session.

* * *

Less than 100 years ago the desert of the American Southwest was regarded with fear and awe—a place of scorching heat and venomous reptiles, a region to be shunned by human beings.

But all that has changed, almost within the last generation. Thanks to the courage and industry of staunch men and women, those of us who reside in the desert areas today enjoy all the comforts and most of the luxuries of urban dwellers—plus pure air, far horizons and freedom from the tensions of life in crowded places.

With this change has come a new responsibility which desert people should respect if they are to preserve the unique character of the land which is their heritage.

The peace and beauty of this desert region is being threatened from many sources: commercial interests would blot out the beauty of the roadside landscape and the distant horizon with unsightly billboards; unscrupulous dealers in native shrubbery would dig up and haul away the cacti and ornamental plants and trees with which Nature has adorned this land for countless ages—and as the plant life disappears the desert becomes uninhabitable for the rare and generally harmless wildlife of the desert terrain.

As population increases, Americans will need more and more recreational areas—places where the human family can find room to play and rest, where plant and wildlife are undisturbed by man's enterprise. We need Nature sanctuaries where both the thoughtful and the confused may retreat in quest of the spiritual strength to be found only in solitude.

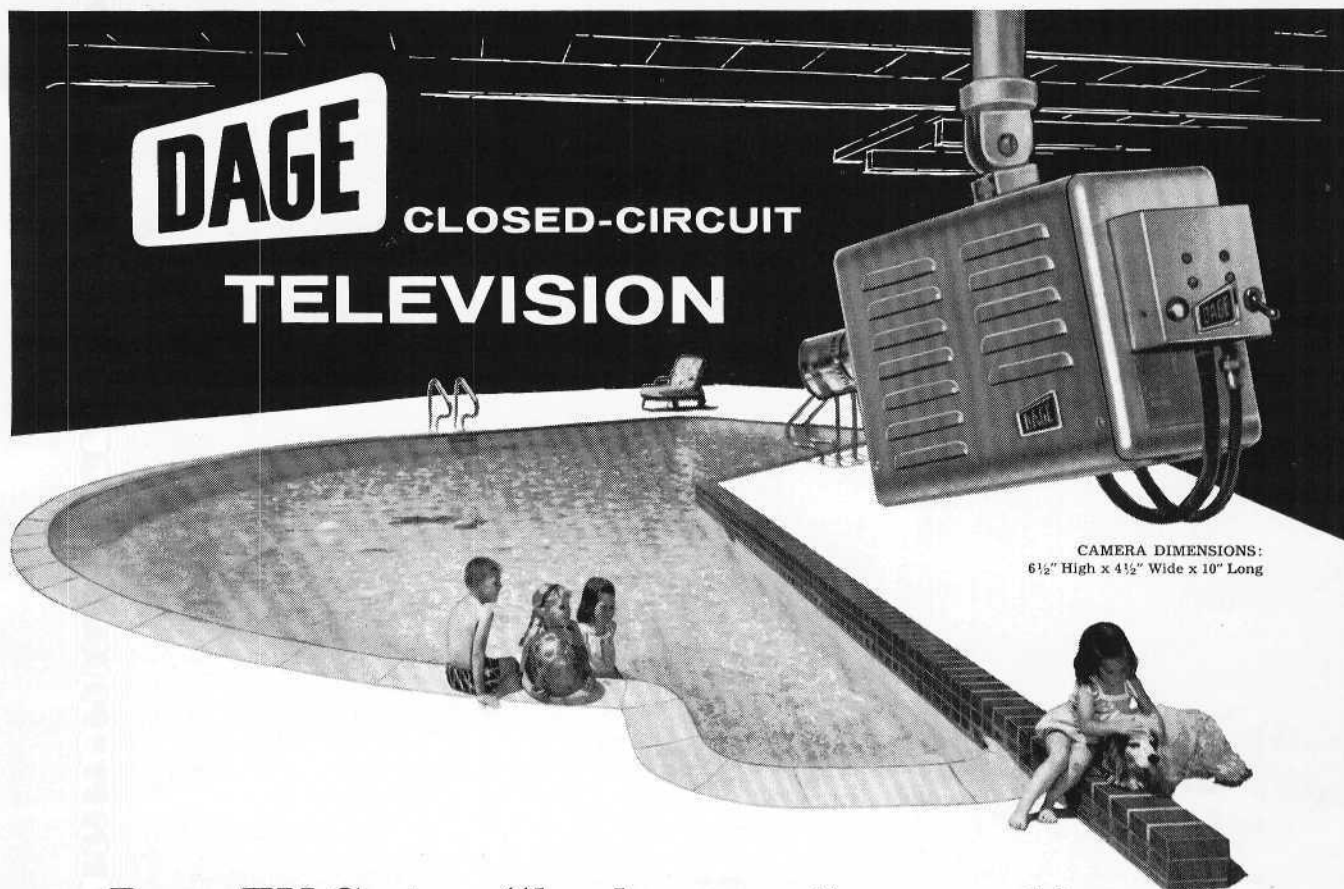
The virgin desert wilderness is the answer—and it is the responsibility of those of us whose homes are in this sunny land to protect it against the encroachment of both greedy commercialism and thoughtless disfiguration. This is our land. Let's keep as much of its beauty and majesty as possible not only for ourselves but for the enjoyment and inspiration which future generations in a more crowded world may need even more urgently than we do today.

* * *

From my scrapbook: "The true conservationist is the man who is more concerned about what the preservation of certain natural resources will do for his soul than for his pocketbook."—David Brower, executive director of the Sierra Club.

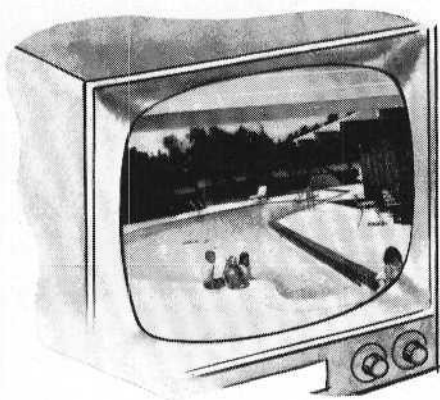
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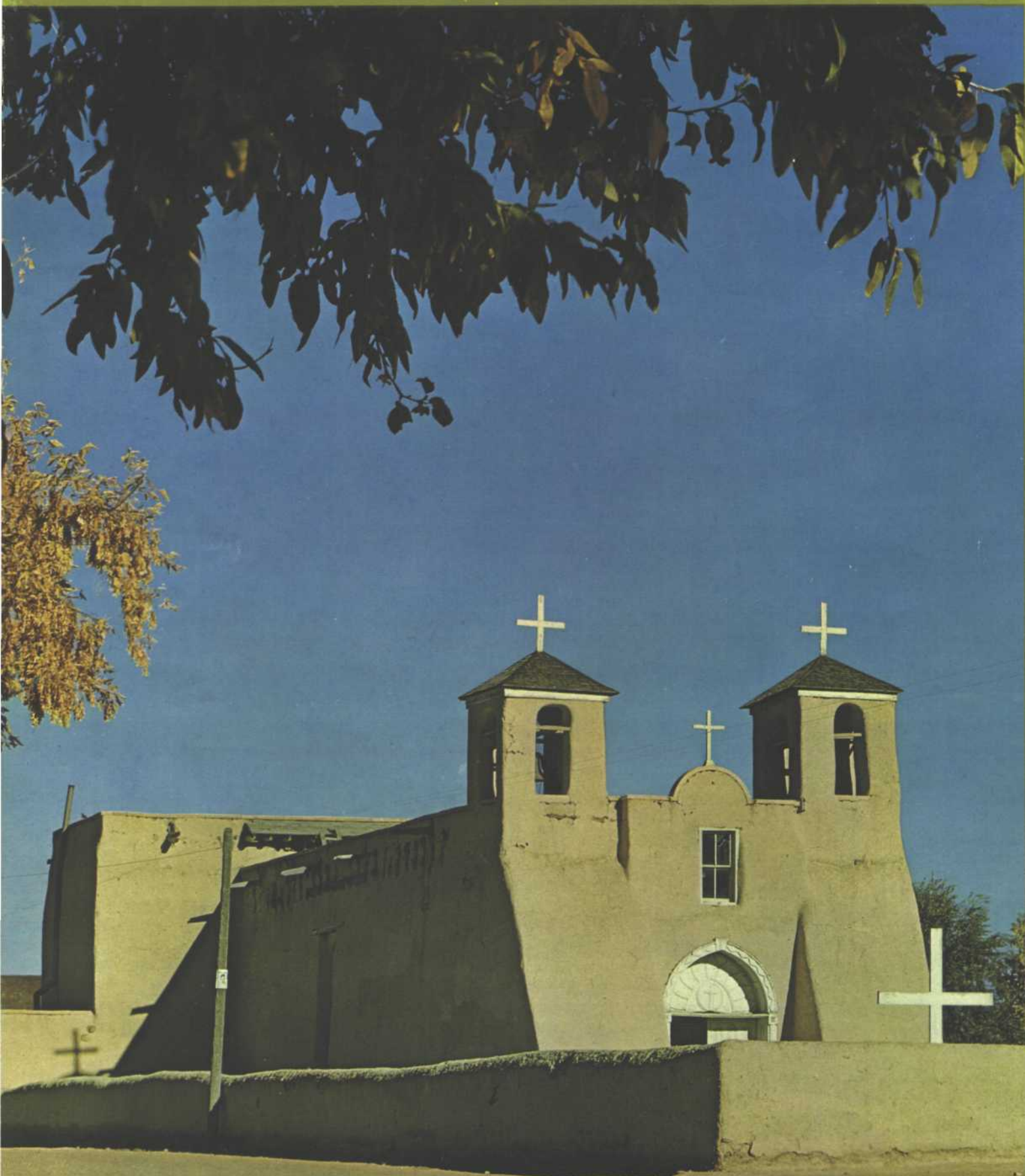
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